THE POEMS OF OSSIAN.

TRANSLATED

By JAMES MACPHERSON, Esq.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

A NEW EDITION.

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(*Drawback.*)

PREFACE.

WITHOUT encreasing his genius, the Author may have improved his language, in the eleven years, that the following Poems have been in the hands of the Public. Errors in diction might have been committed at twenty-four, which the experience of a riper age may remove; and some exuberances in imagery may be restrained with advantage, by a degree of judgment acquired in the progress of time. Impressed with this opinion, he ran over the whole with attention and accuracy; and, he hopes, he has brought the work to a state of correctness, which will preclude all future improvements.

The eagerness with which these Poems have been received abroad, is a recompence for the coldness with which a few have affected to treat them at home. All the polite nations of Europe have transferred them into their respective languages; and they speak of him, who brought them to light, in terms that might flatter the vanity of one fond of fame. In a convenient indifference for a literary reputa-

tion, the author hears praiſe without being elevated, and ribaldry without being depreſſed. He has frequently ſeen the firſt beſtowed too precipitately; and the latter is ſo faithleſs to its purpoſe, that it is often the only index to merit in the preſent age.

Though the taſte, which defines genius, by the points of the compaſs, is a ſubject fit for mirth in itſelf, it is often a ſerious matter in the ſale of the work. When rivers define the limits of abilities, as well as the boundaries of countries, a writer may meaſure his ſucceſs, by the latitude under which he was born. It was to avoid a part of this inconvenience, that the Author is ſaid, by ſome, who ſpeak without any authority, to have aſcribed his own productions to another name. If this was the caſe, he was but young in the art of deception. When he placed the Poet in antiquity, the Tranſlator ſhould have been born on this ſide of the Tweed.

Theſe obſervations regard only the frivolous in matters of literature; theſe, however, form a majority in every age and nation. In this country, men of genuine taſte abound; but their ſtill voice is drowned in the clamours of a multitude, who judge by faſhion of poetry,

as of dreſs. The truth is, to judge aright requires almoſt as much genius as to write well; and good critics are as rare as great poets. Though two hundred thouſand Romans ſtood up, when Virgil came into the Theatre, Varius only could correct the Æneid. He that obtains fame muſt receive it through mere faſhion; and gratify his vanity with the applauſe of men, of whoſe judgment he cannot approve.

The following Poems, it muſt be confeſſed, are more calculated to pleaſe perſons of exquiſite feelings of heart, than thoſe who receive all their impreſſions by the ear. The novelty of cadence, in what is called a proſe verſion, though not deſtitute of harmony, will not to common readers ſupply the abſence of the frequent returns of rhime. This was the opinion of the Writer himſelf, though he yielded to the judgment of others, in a mode, which preſented freedom and dignity of expreſſion, inſtead of fetters, which cramp the thought, whilſt the harmony of language is preſerved. His intention was to publiſh in verſe. The making of poetry, like any other handicraft, may be learned by induſtry; and he had ſerved his apprenticeſhip, though in ſecret, to the muſes.

It is, however, doubtful, whether the harmony which theſe Poems might derive from rhime, even in much better hands than thoſe of the Tranſlator, could atone for the ſimplicity and energy, which they would loſe. The determination of this point ſhall be left to the readers of this Preface. The following is the beginning of a Poem, tranſlated from the Norſe to the Gaëlic language; and, from the latter, transferred into Engliſh. The verſe took little more time to the writer than the proſe; and he himſelf is doubtful (if he has ſucceeded in either), which of them is the moſt literal verſion.

FRAGMENT OF A NORTHERN TALE.

Where Harold, with golden hair ſpread o'er Lochlin * his high commands; where, with juſtice, he ruled the tribes, who ſunk, ſubdued, beneath his ſword; abrupt riſes Gormal † in ſnow! The tempeſts roll dark on his ſides, but calm, above, his vaſt forehead appears. White-iſſuing from the ſkirt of his ſtorms, the troubled torrents pour down his ſides. Joining, as they roar along, they bear the Torno, in foam, to the main.

* The Gaëlic name of Scandinavia, or Scandinia.

† The mountains of Sevo.

Grey

Grey on the bank, and far from men, half-covered, by ancient pines, from the wind, a lonely pile exalts its head, long-ſhaken by the ſtorms of the north. To this fled Sigurd, fierce in fight, from Harold the leader of armies, when fate had brightened his ſpear, with renown: when he conquered in that rude field, where Lulan's warriors fell in blood, or roſe in terror on the waves of the main. Darkly ſat the grey-haired chief; yet ſorrow dwelt not in his ſoul. But when the warrior thought on the paſt, his proud heart heaved again his ſide: forth flew his ſword from its place; he wounded Harold in all the winds.

One daughter, and only one, but bright in form and mild of ſoul, the laſt beam of the ſetting line, remained to Sigurd of all his race. His ſon, in Lulan's battle ſlain, beheld not his father's flight from his foes. Nor finiſhed ſeemed the ancient line! The ſplendid beauty of bright-eyed Fithon, covered ſtill the fallen king with renown. Her arm was white like Gormal's ſnow; her boſom whiter than the foam of the main, when roll the waves beneath the wrath of the winds. Like two ſtars were her radiant eyes, like two ſtars that riſe on the deep, when dark tumult embroils the night. Pleaſant are their beams aloft, as ſtately they aſcend the ſkies.

Nor Odin forgot, in aught, the maid. Her form ſcarce equalled her lofty mind. Awe moved around her ſtately ſteps. Heroes loved—but ſhrunk away in their fears. Yet midſt the pride of all her charms, her heart was ſoft and her ſoul was kind. She ſaw the mournful with tearful eyes. Tranſient darkneſs aroſe in her breaſt. Her joy was in the chaſe. Each morning, when doubtful light wandered dimly on Lulan's waves, ſhe rouzed the reſounding woods, to Gormal's head of ſnow. Nor moved the maid alone, &c.

The ſame verſified.

Where fair-hair'd Harold, o'er Scandinia reign'd,
And held with juſtice, what his valour gain'd,
Sevo, in ſnow, his rugged forehead rears,
And, o'er the warfare of his ſtorms, appears
Abrupt and vaſt. —White-wandering down his ſide
A thouſand torrents, gleaming as they glide,
Unite below; and pouring through the plain
Hurry the troubled Torno to the main.

Grey, on the bank, remote from human kind,
By aged pines, half ſheltered from the wind,
A homely manſion roſe, of antique form,
For ages batter'd by the polar ſtorm.
To this fierce Sigurd fled, from Norway's lord,
When fortune ſettled, on the warrior's ſword,
In that rude field, where Suecia's chiefs were ſlain,
Or forced to wander o'er the Bothnic main.
Dark was his life, yet undiſturb'd with woes,
But when the memory of defeat aroſe

His

His proud heart ſtruck his ſide; he graſpt the ſpear,
And wounded Harold in the vacant air.

One daughter only, but of form divine,
The laſt fair beam of the departing line,
Remain'd of Sigurd's race. His warlike ſon
Fell in the ſhock, which overturn'd the throne,
Nor deſolate the houſe! Fionia's charms
Suſtain'd the glory, which they loſt in arms.
White was her arm, as Sevo's lofty ſnow,
Her boſom fairer than the waves below,
When heaving to the winds. Her radiant eyes
Like two bright ſtars, exulting as they riſe,
O'er the dark tumult of a ſtormy night,
And gladd'ning heav'n, with their majeſtic light.

In nought is Odin to the maid unkind.
Her form ſcarce equals her exalted mind;
Awe leads her ſacred ſteps where'er they move,
And mankind worſhip, where they dare not love.
But, mix'd with ſoftneſs, was the virgin's pride,
Her heart had feeling, which her eyes deny'd.
Her bright tears ſtarted at another's woes,
While tranſient darkneſs on her ſoul aroſe.

The chaſe ſhe lov'd; when morn, with doubtful beam
Came dimly wandering o'er the Bothnic ſtream,
On Sevo's ſounding ſides, ſhe bent the bow,
And rous'd his foreſts to his head of ſnow.
Nor mov'd the maid alone; &c.

One of the chief improvements, on this edition, is the care taken in arranging the Poems, in the order of time; ſo as to form a kind

kind of regular hiſtory of the age to which they relate. The writer has now reſigned them for ever to their fate. That they have been well received by the Public, appears from an extenſive ſale; that they ſhall continue to be well received, he may venture to propheſy without the gift of that inſpiration, to which poets lay claim. Through the medium of verſion upon verſion, they retain, in foreign languages, their native character of ſimplicity and energy. Genuine poetry, like gold, loſes little, when properly transfuſed; but when a compoſition cannot bear the teſt of a literal verſion, it is a counterfeit which ought not to paſs current. The operation muſt, however, be performed with ſkilful hands. A Tranſlator, who cannot equal his original, is incapable of expreſſing its beauties.

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Aug. 15, 1773.

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FIRST VOLUME.

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CATH-LODA:

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ARGUMENT.

Fingal, when very young, making a voyage to the Orkney iſlands, was driven, by ſtreſs of weather, into a bay of Scandinavia, near the reſidence of Starno, king of Lochlin. Starno invites Fingal to a feaſt. Fingal, doubting the faith of the king, and mindful of a former breach of hoſpitality, refuſes to go.—Starno gathers together his tribes; Fingal reſolves to defend himſelf. —Night coming on, Duth-maruno propoſes to Fingal, to obſerve the motions of the enemy.—The king himſelf undertakes the watch. Advancing towards the enemy, he, accidentally, comes to the cave of Turthor, where Starno had confined Conban-carglas, the captive daughter of a neighbouring chief.—Her ſtory is imperfect, a part of the original being loſt.—Fingal comes to a place of worſhip, where Starno and his ſon, Swaran, conſulted the ſpirit of Loda, concerning the iſſue of the war.—The rencounter of Fingal and Swaran.—*Duän* firſt concludes with a deſcription of the airy hall of Cruth-loda, ſuppoſed to be the Odin of Scandinavia.

CATH-LODA:

DUAN FIRST.

A TALE of the times of old! Why, thou wanderer unseen! Thou bender of the thistle of Lora; why, thou breeze of the valley, hast thou left mine ear? I hear

* The bards distinguished those compositions, in which the narration is often interrupted by episodes and apostrophes, by the name of *Duän*. Since the extinction of the order of the bards, it has been a general name for all ancient compositions in verse. The abrupt manner in which the story of this poem begins, may render it obscure to some readers; it may not therefore be improper, to give here the traditional preface, which is generally prefixed to it. Two years after he took to wife Ros-crana, the daughter of Cormac, king of Ireland, Fingal undertook an expedition into Orkney, to visit his friend Cathulla, king of Inistore. After staying a few days at Carric-thura, the residence of Cathulla, the king set sail, to return to Scotland; but, a violent storm arising, his ships were driven into a bay of Scandinavia, near Gormal, the seat of Starno, king of Lochlin, his avowed enemy. Starno, upon the appearance of strangers on his coast, summoned together the neighbouring tribes, and advanced, in a hostile manner, towards the bay of U-thorno, where Fingal had taken shelter. Upon discovering who the strangers were, and fearing the valour of Fingal, which he had, more than once, experienced before, he resolved to accomplish by treachery, what he was afraid he should fail in by open force. He invited, therefore, Fingal to a feast,

hear no diſtant roar of ſtreams! No ſound of the harp, from the rock! Come, thou huntreſs of Lutha, Malvina, call back his ſoul to the bard. I look forward to Lochlin of lakes, to the dark, billowy bay of U-thorno, where Fingal deſcends from ocean, from the roar of winds. Few are the heroes of Morven, in a land unknown!

Starno ſent a dweller of Loda, to bid Fingal to the feaſt; but the king remembered the paſt, and all his rage aroſe. "Nor Gormal's moſſy towers, nor Starno, ſhall Fingal behold. Deaths wander, like ſhadows, over his fiery ſoul! Do I forget that beam of light, the white-handed daughter * of kings? Go, ſon of Loda; his words are wind to Fingal: wind, that, to and fro, drives the thiſtle, in autumn's duſky vale. Duth-maruno †, arm of

feaſt, at which he intended to aſſaſſinate him. The king prudently declined to go, and Starno betook himſelf to arms. The ſequel of the ſtory may be learned from the poem itſelf.

* Agandecca, the daughter of Starno, whom her father killed, on account of her diſcovering to Fingal a plot laid againſt his life. Her ſtory is related at large in the third book of Fingal.

† Duth-maruno is a name very famous in tradition. Many of his great actions are handed down, but the poems, which contained the detail of them, are long ſince loſt. He lived, it is ſuppoſed, in that part of the north of Scotland, which is over againſt Orkney. Duth-maruno, Cromma-glas, Struthmor, and Cormar, are mentioned, as attending Comhal, in his laſt battle againſt the tribe of Morni, in a poem, which is ſtill preſerved. It is not the work of Oſſian; the phraſeology betrays it to be

of death! Cromma-glas, of iron ſhields! Struthmor, dweller of battle's wing; Cormar, whoſe ſhips bound on ſeas, careleſs as the courſe of a meteor, on dark-rolling clouds! Ariſe, around me, children of heroes, in a land unknown! Let each look on his ſhield, like Trenmor, the ruler of wars. "Come down," thus Trenmor ſaid, "thou dweller between the harps! Thou ſhalt roll this ſtream away, or waſte with me in earth."

Around the king they riſe in wrath. No words come forth: they ſeize their ſpears. Each ſoul is rolled into itſelf. At length the ſudden clang is waked, on all their echoing ſhields. Each takes his hill, by night; at intervals, they darkly ſtand. Unequal burſts the hum of ſongs, between the roaring wind!

Broad over them roſe the moon!

In his arms, came tall Duth-maruno; he from Croma of rocks, ſtern hunter of the boar! In his dark boat he roſe on waves, when Crumthormo * awaked its woods. In the chaſe he ſhone, among foes: No fear was thine, Duth-maruno!

be a modern compoſition. It is ſomething like thoſe trivial compoſitions, which the Iriſh bards forged, under the name of Oſſian, in the fifteenth and ſixteenth centuries. Duth-maruno ſignifies, *black and ſteady*; Cromma-glas, *bending and ſwarthy*; Struthmor, *roaring ſtream*; Cormar, *expert at ſea*.

* Crumthormoth, one of the Orkney or Shetland iſlands. The name is not of Galic original. It was ſubject to its own petty king, who is mentioned in one of Oſſian's poems.

" Son of daring Comhal, ſhall my ſteps be forward through night? From this ſhield ſhall I view them, over their gleaming tribes? Starno, king of lakes, is before me, and Swaran, the foe of ſtrangers. Their words are not in vain, by Loda's ſtone of power.—Should Duth-maruno not return, his ſpouſe is lonely, at home, where meet two roaring ſtreams, on Crathmo-craulo's plain. Around are hills, with echoing woods, the ocean is rolling near. My ſon looks on ſcreaming ſea-fowl, a young wanderer on the field. Give the head of a boar to Can-dona *, tell him of his father's joy, when the

* Cean-daona, *head of the people*, the ſon of Duth-maruno. He became afterwards famous, in the expeditions of Oſſian, after the death of Fingal. The traditional tales concerning him are very numerous, and, from the epithet in them, beſtowed on him (*Can-dona of boars*), it would appear, that he applied himſelf to that kind of hunting, which his father, in this paragraph, is ſo anxious to recommend to him. As I have mentioned the traditional tales of the Highlands, it may not be improper here to give ſome account of them. After the expulſion of the bards, from the houſes of the chiefs, they, being an indolent race of men, owed all their ſubſiſtence to the generoſity of the vulgar, whom they diverted with repeating the compoſitions of their predeceſſors, and running up the genealogies of their entertainers to the family of their chiefs. As this ſubject was, however, ſoon exhauſted, they were obliged to have recourſe to invention, and form ſtories, having no foundation in fact, which were ſwallowed, with great credulity, by an ignorant multitude. By frequent repeating, the fable grew upon their hands, and, as each threw in whatever circumſtance he thought conducive to raiſe the admiration of his hearers, the ſtory became, at laſt, ſo devoid of all probability,

the briſtly ſtrength of I-thorno rolled on his lifted ſpear. Tell him of my deeds in war! Tell where his father fell!"

"Not forgetful of my fathers," ſaid Fingal, "I have bounded over the ſeas. Theirs were the times of danger, in the days of old. Nor ſettles darkneſs on me, before foes, though youthful in my locks. Chief of Crathmo-craulo, the field of night is mine."

Fingal ruſhed, in all his arms, wide-bounding over Turthor's ſtream, that ſent its ſullen roar, by night, through Gormal's miſty vale. A moon-beam glittered on a rock; in the midſt, ſtood a ſtately form; a form with floating locks, like Lochlin's white-boſomed maids. Unequal are her ſteps, and ſhort. She throws

bility, that even the vulgar themſelves did not believe it. They, however, liked the tales ſo well, that the bards found their advantage in turning profeſſed tale-makers. They then launched out into the wildeſt regions of fiction and romance. I firmly believe, there are more ſtories of giants, enchanted caſtles, dwarfs, and palfreys, in the Highlands, than in any country in Europe. Theſe tales, it is certain, like other romantic compoſitions, have many things in them unnatural, and, conſequently, diſguſtful to true taſte; but, I know not how it happens, they command attention more than any other fictions I ever met with. The extreme length of theſe pieces is very ſurpriſing, ſome of them required many days to repeat them, but ſuch hold they take of the memory, that few circumſtances are ever omitted by thoſe who have received them only from oral tradition: What is ſtill more amazing, the very language of the bards is ſtill preſerved. It is curious to ſee, that the deſcriptions of magnificence, introduced in theſe tales, are even ſuperior to all the pompous oriental fictions of the kind.

a broken ſong on wind. At times ſhe toſſes her white arms: for grief is dwelling in her ſoul.

"Torcul-torno *, of aged locks!" ſhe ſaid, "where now are thy ſteps, by Lulan? Thou haſt failed at thine own dark ſtreams, father of Conban-cârgla! But I behold thee, chief of Lulan, ſporting by Loda's hall, when the dark-ſkirted night is rolled along the ſky.—Thou, ſometimes, hideſt the moon with thy ſhield. I have ſeen her dim, in heaven. Thou

* Torcul-torno, according to tradition, was king of Crathlun, a diſtrict in Sweden. The river Lulan ran near the reſidence of Torcul-torno. There is a river in Sweden, ſtill called Lula, which is probably the ſame with Lulan. The war between Starno and Torcul-torno, which terminated in the death of the latter, had its riſe at a hunting party. Starno being invited, in a friendly manner, by Torcul-torno, both kings, with their followers, went to the mountains of Stivamore, to hunt. A boar ruſhed from the wood before the kings, and Torcul-torno killed it. Starno thought this behaviour a breach upon the privilege of gueſts, who were always *honoured*, as tradition expreſſes it, *with the danger of the chaſe*. A quarrel aroſe, the kings came to battle, with all their attendants, and the party of Torcul-torno were totally defeated, and he himſelf ſlain. Starno purſued his victory, laid waſte the diſtrict of Carthlun, and, coming to the reſidence of Torcul-torno, carried off, by force, Conban-carglas, the beautiful daughter of his enemy. Her he confined in a cave, near the palace of Gormal, where, on account of her cruel treatment, ſhe became diſtracted.

The paragraph, juſt now before us, is the ſong of Conban-carglas, at the time ſhe was diſcovered by Fingal. It is in lyric meaſure, and ſet to muſic, which is wild and ſimple, and ſo inimitably ſuited to the ſituation of the unhappy lady, that few can hear it without tears.

kindleſt

kindleſt thy hair into meteors, and saileſt along the night. Why am I forgot, in my cave, king of ſhaggy boars? Look from the hall of Loda, on thy lonely daughter."

"Who art thou," ſaid Fingal, "voice of night?"

She, trembling, turned away.

"Who art thou, in thy darkneſs?"

She ſhrunk into the cave.

The king looſed the thong from her hands. He aſked about her fathers.

"Torcul-torno," ſhe ſaid, "once dwelt at Lulan's foamy ſtream: he dwelt—but, now, in Loda's hall, he ſhakes the ſounding ſhell. He met Starno of Lochlin, in war; long fought the dark-eyed kings. My father fell, in his blood, blue-ſhielded Torcul-torno! By a rock, at Lulan's ſtream, I had pierc'd the bounding roe. My white hand gathered my hair, from off the ruſhing winds. I heard a noiſe. Mine eyes were up. My ſoft breaſt roſe on high. My ſtep was forward, at Lulan, to meet thee, Torcul-torno! It was Starno, dreadful king! His red eyes rolled on me in love. Dark waved his ſhaggy brow, above his gathered ſmile. Where is my father, I ſaid, he that was mighty in war? Thou art left alone among foes, O daughter of Torcul-torno! He took my hand. He raiſed the ſail. In this cave he placed me dark. At times, he comes, a gathered miſt. He lifts, before me, my father's ſhield. But often paſſes

a beam

a beam * of youth, far diſtant from my cave. The ſon of Starno moves in my ſight. He dwells lonely in my ſoul."

"Maid of Lulan," ſaid Fingal, "white-handed daughter of grief! a cloud, marked with ſtreaks of fire, is rolled along thy ſoul. Look not to that dark-robed moon; look not to thoſe meteors of heaven. My gleaming ſteel is around thee, the terror of thy foes! It is not the ſteel of the feeble, nor of the dark in ſoul! The maids are not ſhut in our † caves of ſtreams. They toſs not their white arms alone. They bend, fair within their locks, above the harps of Selma. Their voice is not in the deſert wild. We melt along the pleaſing ſound!"

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Fingal, again, advanced his ſteps, wide through the boſom of night, to where the trees of Loda ſhook amid ſqually winds. Three ſtones, with heads of moſs, are there; a ſtream,

* By *the beam of youth*, it afterwards appears, that Conban-carglas means Swaran, the ſon of Starno, with whom, during her confinement, ſhe had fallen in love.

† From this contraſt, which Fingal draws, between his own nation and the inhabitants of Scandinavia, we may learn, that the former were much leſs barbarous than the latter. This diſtinction is ſo much obſerved throughout the poems of Oſſian, that there can be no doubt, that he followed the real manners of both nations in his own time. At the cloſe of the ſpeech of Fingal, there is a great part of the original loſt.

with foaming courſe: and dreadful, rolled around them, is the dark-red cloud of Loda. High from its top looked forward a ghoſt, half-formed of the ſhadowy ſmoak. He poured his voice, at times, amidſt the roaring ſtream. Near, bending beneath a blaſted tree, two heroes received his words: Swaran of lakes, and Starno foe of ſtrangers. On their dun ſhields, they darkly leaned: their ſpears are forward through night. Shrill ſounds the blaſt of darkneſs, in Starno's floating beard.

They heard the tread of Fingal. The warriors roſe in arms. "Swaran, lay that wanderer low," ſaid Starno, in his pride. "Take the ſhield of thy father. It is a rock in war."— Swaran threw his gleaming ſpear. It ſtood fixed in Loda's tree. Then came the foes forward, with ſwords. They mixed their rattling ſteel. Through the thongs of Swaran's ſhield ruſhed the blade * of Luno. The ſhield fell rolling on earth. Cleft the helmet † fell down. Fingal ſtopt the lifted ſteel. Wrathful ſtood Swaran, unarmed. He rolled his ſilent eyes; he threw his ſword on earth. Then, ſlowly ſtalking over the ſtream, he whiſtled as he went.

Nor unſeen of his father is Swaran. Starno turns away in wrath. His ſhaggy brows wave

* The ſword of Fingal, ſo called from its maker, Luno of Lochlin.

† The helmet of Swaran. The behaviour of Fingal is always conſiſtent with that generoſity of ſpirit which belongs to a hero. He takes no advantage of a foe diſarmed.

dark, above his gathered rage. He ſtrikes Loda's tree, with his ſpear. He raiſes the hum of ſongs. They come to the hoſt of Lochlin, each in his own dark path; like two foam-covered ſtreams, from two rainy vales!

To Turthor's plain Fingal returned. Fair roſe the beam of the eaſt. It ſhone on the ſpoils of Lochlin in the hand of the king. From her cave came forth, in her beauty, the daughter of Torcul-torno. She gathered her hair from wind. She wildly raiſed her ſong. The ſong of Lulan of ſhells, where once her father dwelt. She ſaw Starno's bloody ſhield. Gladneſs roſe, a light on her face. She ſaw the cleft helmet of Swaran *. She ſhrunk, darkened, from Fingal.—" Art thou fallen, by thy hundred ſtreams, O love of the mournful maid!"

U-thorno, that riſeſt in waters! on whoſe ſide are the meteors of night! I behold the dark moon deſcending, behind thy reſounding woods. On thy top dwells the miſty Loda: the houſe of the ſpirits of men! In the end of his cloudy hall, bends forward Cruth-loda of

* Conban-carglas, from ſeeing the helmet of Swaran bloody in the hands of Fingal, conjectured that that hero was killed. A part of the original is loſt. It appears, however, from the ſequel of the poem, that the daughter of Torcul-torno did not long ſurvive her ſurprize, occaſioned by the ſuppoſed death of her lover. The deſcription of the airy hall of Loda (which is ſuppoſed to be the ſame with that of Odin, the deity of Scandinavia) is more picturesque and deſcriptive, than any in the Edda, or other works of the northern Scalders.

ſwords.

ſwords. His form is dimly ſeen, amid his wavy miſt. His right-hand is on his ſhield. In his left is the half-viewleſs ſhell. The roof of his dreadful hall is marked with nightly fires!

The race of Cruth-loda advance, a ridge of formleſs ſhades. He reaches the ſounding ſhell, to thoſe who ſhone in war. But, between him and the feeble, his ſhield riſes, a darkened orb. He is a ſetting meteor, to the weak in arms. Bright as a rainbow on ſtreams, came Lulan's white-boſomed maid.

CATH-LODA:

A

POEM.

DUAN SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

FINGAL returning with day, devolves the command on Duth-maruno, who engages the enemy, and drives them over the ſtream of Turthor. Having recalled his people, he congratulates Duth-maruno on his ſucceſs, but diſcovers, that that hero had been mortally wounded in the action.—Duth-maruno dies. Ulin, the bard, in honour of the dead, introduces the epiſode of Colgorm and Strinadona, which concludes this *duän*.



CATH-LODA:

DUAN SECOND.

"WHERE art thou, ſon of the king?" ſaid dark-haired Duth-maruno. "Where haſt thou failed, young beam of Selma? He returns not from the boſom of night! Morning is ſpread on U-thorno. In his miſt is the ſun on his hill. Warriors, lift the ſhields, in my preſence. He muſt not fall, like a fire from heaven, whoſe place is not marked on the ground. He comes, like an eagle, from the ſkirt of his ſqually wind! In his hand are the ſpoils of foes. King of Selma, our ſouls were ſad!"

"Near us are the foes, Duth-maruno. They come forward, like waves in miſt, when their foamy tops are ſeen, at times, above the low-ſailing vapour. The traveller ſhrinks on his journey; he knows not whither to fly. No trembling travellers are we! Sons of heroes call forth the ſteel. Shall the ſword of Fingal ariſe, or ſhall a warrior lead?"

* The deeds of old, ſaid Duth-maruno, are like paths to our eyes, O Fingal! Broad ſhielded

* In this ſhort epiſode we have a very probable account given us, of the origin of monarchy in Caledonia. The

ſhielded Trenmor is ſtill ſeen, amidſt his own dim years. Nor feeble was the ſoul of the king. There, no dark deed wandered in ſecret. From their hundred ſtreams came the tribes, to graſſy Colglancrona. Their chiefs were before them. Each ſtrove to lead the war. Their ſwords were often half-unſheathed. Red rolled their eyes of rage. Separate they ſtood, and hummed their ſurly ſongs. "Why ſhould they yield to each other? their fathers were equal in war." Trenmor was there, with his people, ſtately in

Cael or Gauls, who poſſeſſed the countries to the north of the Frith of Edinburgh, were, originally, a number of diſtinct tribes, or clans, each ſubject to its own chief, who was free and independent of any other power. When the Romans invaded them, the common danger might, perhaps, have induced thoſe *reguli* to join together; but, as they were unwilling to yield to the command of one of their own number, their battles were ill-conducted, and, conſequently, unſucceſsful. Trenmor was the firſt who repreſented to the chiefs, the bad conſequences of carrying on their wars in this irregular manner, and adviſed, that they themſelves ſhould alternately lead in battle. They did ſo, but they were unſucceſsful. When it came to Trenmor's turn, he totally defeated the enemy, by his ſuperior valour and conduct, which gained him ſuch an intereſt among the tribes, that he, and his family after him, were regarded as kings; or, to uſe the poet's expreſſion, *the words of power ruſhed forth from Selma of kings*. The regal authority, however, except in time of war, was but inconſiderable; for every chief, within his own diſtrict, was abſolute and independent. From the ſcene of the battle in this epiſode (which was in the valley of Crona, a little to the north of Agricola's wall), I ſhould ſuppoſe, that the enemies of the Caledonians were the Romans, or provincial Britons.

youthful

youthful locks. He ſaw the advancing foe. The grief of his ſoul aroſe. He bade the chiefs to lead, by turns: they led, but they were rolled away. From his own moſſy hill, blue-ſhielded Trenmor came down. He led wide-ſkirted battle, and the ſtrangers failed. Around him the dark-browed warriors came: they ſtruck the ſhield of joy. Like a pleaſant gale, the words of power ruſhed forth from Selma of kings. But the chiefs led, by turns, in war, till mighty danger roſe: then was the hour of the king to conquer in the field.

"Not unknown," ſaid Cromma-glaſs * of ſhields, "are the deeds of our fathers. But who

* In tradition, this Cromma-glaſs makes a great figure in that battle which Comhal loſt, together with his life, to the tribe of Morni. I have juſt now, in my hands, an Iriſh compoſition, of a very modern date, as appears from the language, in which all the traditions, concerning that deciſive engagement, are jumbled together. In juſtice to the merit of the poem, I ſhould have here preſented to the reader a tranſlation of it, did not the bard mention ſome circumſtances very ridiculous, and others altogether indecent. Morna, the wife of Comhal, had a principal hand in all the tranſactions previous to the defeat and death of her huſband; ſhe, to uſe the words of the bard, *who was the guiding ſtar of the women of Erin*. The bard, it is to be hoped, miſrepreſented the ladies of his country, for Morna's behaviour was, according to him, ſo void of all decency and virtue, that it cannot be ſuppoſed, they had choſen her for their *guiding ſtar*. The poem conſiſts of many ſtanzas. The language is figurative, and the numbers harmonious; but the piece ſo full of anachroniſms, and ſo unequal in its compoſition, that the author, moſt undoubtedly, was either mad, or drunk, when he wrote it. It is worthy of being

who ſhall now lead the war, before the race of kings? Miſt ſettles on theſe four dark hills: within it lét each warrior ſtrike his ſhield. Spirits may deſcend in darkneſs, and mark us for the war."

They went, each to his hill of miſt. Bards marked the ſounds of the ſhields. Loudeſt rung thy boſs, Duth-maruno. Thou muſt lead in war!

Like the murmur of waters, the race of U-thorno came down. Starno led the battle, and Swaran of ſtormy iſles. They looked forward from iron ſhields, like Cruth-loda fiery-eyed, when he looks from behind the darkened moon, and ſtrews his ſigns on night. The foes met by Turthor's ſtream. They heaved like ridgy waves. Their echoing ſtrokes are mixed. Shadowy death flies over the hoſts. They were clouds of hail, with ſqually winds in their ſkirts. Their ſhowers are roaring together. Below them ſwells the dark-rolling deep.

Strife of gloomy U-thorno, why ſhould I mark thy wounds! Thou art with the years that are gone; thou fadeſt on my ſoul!

Starno brought forward his ſkirt of war, and Swaran his own dark wing. Nor a harmleſs fire is Duth-maruno's ſword. Lochlin is

being remarked, that Comhal is, in this poem, very often called, *Combal na h'Albin*, or *Comhal of Albion*, which ſufficiently demonſtrates, that the allegations of Keating and O'Flaherty, concerning *Fion Mac-Commal*, are but of late invention.

rolled

rolled over her ſtreams. The wrathful kings are loſt in thought. They roll their ſilent eyes, over the flight of their land. The horn of Fingal was heard; the ſons of woody Albion returned. But many lay, by Turthor's ſtream, ſilent in their blood.

"Chief of Crathmo," ſaid the king, "Duth-maruno, hunter of boars! not harmleſs returns my eagle from the field of foes! For this white-boſomed Lanul ſhall brighten, at her ſtreams; Candona ſhall rejoice, as he wanders in Crathmo's fields."

"Colgorm*," replied the chief, "was the firſt of my race in Albion; Colgorm, the rider of ocean, through its watry vales. He ſlew his brother in I thorno †: he left the land of his fathers. He choſe his place, in ſilence, by rocky Crathmo-craulo. His race came forth, in their years; they came forth to war, but they always fell. The wound of my fathers is mine, king of echoing iſles!

* The family of Duth-maruno, it appears, came originally from Scandinavia, or, at leaſt, from ſome of the northern iſles, ſubject, in chief, to the kings of Lochlin. The Highland ſenachies, who never miſſed to make their comments on, and additions to, the works of Oſſian, have given us a long liſt of the anceſtors of Duth-maruno, and a particular account of their actions, many of which are of the marvellous kind. One of the tale-makers of the north has choſen for his hero, Starnmor, the father of Duth-maruno, and, conſidering the adventures through which he has led him, the piece is neither diſagreeable, nor abounding with that kind of fiction which ſhocks credibility.

† An iſland of Scandinavia.

"He drew an arrow from his ſide! He fell pale, in a land unknown. His ſoul came forth to his fathers, to their ſtormy iſle. There they purſued boars of miſt, along the ſkirts of winds. The chiefs ſtood ſilent around, as the ſtones of Loda, on their hill. The traveller ſees them, through the twilight, from his lonely path. He thinks them the ghoſts of the aged, forming future wars.

"Night came down, on U-thorno. Still ſtood the chiefs in their grief. The blaſt whiſtled, by turns, through every warrior's hair. Fingal, at length, broke forth from the thoughts of his ſoul. He called Ullin of harps, and bade the ſong to riſe. "No falling fire, that is only ſeen, and then retires in night; no departing meteor was he that is laid ſo low. He was like the ſtrong-beaming ſun, long rejoicing on his hill. Call the names of his fathers, from their dwellings old!"

I-thorno*, ſaid the bard, that riſeſt midſt

* This epiſode is, in the original, extremely beautiful. It is ſet to that wild kind of muſic, which ſome of the Highlanders diſtinguiſh, by the title of *Fon Oi-marra*, or, the *Song of mermaids*. Some part of the air is abſolutely infernal, but there are many returns in the meaſure, which are inexpreſſibly wild and beautiful. From the genius of the muſic, I ſhould think it came originally from Scandinavia, for the fictions delivered down concerning the *Oi-marra* (who are reputed the authors of the muſic), exactly correſpond with the notions of the northern nations, concerning the *diræ*, or *goddeſſes of death*.--Of all the names in this epiſode, there is none of a Gallic original, except Strina-dona, which ſignifies the *ſtriſe of heroes*.

ridgy

ridgy ſeas! Why is thy head ſo gloomy, in the ocean's miſt? From thy vales came forth a race, fearleſs as thy ſtrong-winged eagles; the race of Colgorm of iron ſhields, dwellers of Loda's hall.

In Tormoth's reſounding iſle, aroſe Lurthan, ſtreamy hill. It bent its woody head over a ſilent vale. There, at foamy Cruruth's ſource, dwelt Rurmar, hunter of boars! His daughter was fair as a ſun-beam, white-boſomed Strina-dona!

Many a king of heroes, and hero of iron ſhields; many a youth of heavy locks came to Rurmar's echoing hall. They came to woo the maid, the ſtately huntreſs of Tormoth wild. But thou lookeſt careleſs from thy ſteps, high-boſomed Strina-dona!

If on the heath ſhe moved, her breaſt was whiter than the down of Cana *; if on the ſea-beat ſhore, than the foam of the rolling ocean. Her eyes were two ſtars of light. Her face was heaven's bow in ſhowers. Her dark hair flowed round it, like the ſtreaming clouds. Thou wert the dweller of ſouls, white-handed Strina-dona!

Colgorm came, in his ſhip, and Corculſuran, king of ſhells. The brothers came,

* The *Cana* is a certain kind of graſs, which grows plentifully in the heathy moraſſes of the north. Its ſtalk is of the reedy kind, and it carries a tuft of down, very much reſembling cotton. It is exceſſively white, and, conſequently, often introduced by the bards, in their ſimiles concerning the beauty of women.

from I-thorno, to woo the ſun-beam of Tormoth wild. She ſaw them in their echoing ſteel. Her ſoul was fixed on blue-eyed Colgorm. Ul-lochlin's * nightly eye looked in, and ſaw the toſſing arms of Strina-dona.

Wrathful the brothers frowned. Their flaming eyes, in ſilence, met. They turned away. They ſtruck their ſhields. Their hands were trembling on their ſwords. They ruſhed into the ſtrife of heroes, for long-haired Strina-dona.

Corcul-ſuran fell in blood. On his iſle, raged the ſtrength of his father. He turned Colgorm, from I-thorno, to wander on all the winds. In Crathmo-craulo's rocky field, he dwelt by a foreign ſtream. Nor darkened the king alone, that beam of light was near, the daughter of echoing Tormoth, white-armed Strina-dona †.

* Ul-lochlin, *the guide to Lochlin*; the name of a ſtar.

† The continuation of this epiſode is juſt now in my hands; but the language is ſo different from, and the ideas ſo unworthy of, Oſſian, that I have rejected it, as an interpolation by a modern bard.

CATH-LODA:

A

POEM.

DUAN THIRD.

ARGUMENT.

Ossian, after ſome general reflections, deſcribes the ſituation of Fingal, and the poſition of the army of Lochlin.—The converſation of Starno and Swaran.—The epiſode of Corman-trunar and Foina-brâgal.—Starno, from his own example, recommends to Swaran, to ſurpriſe Fingal, who had retired alone to a neighbouring hill. Upon Swaran's refuſal, Starno undertakes the enterpriſe himſelf, is overcome, and taken priſoner, by Fingal.—He is diſmiſſed, after a ſevere reprimand for his cruelty.

CATH-LODA:

DUAN THIRD.

WHENCE is the ftream of years? Whither do they roll along? Where have they hid, in mift, their many-coloured fides?

I look into the times of old, but they feem dim to Offian's eyes, like reflected moon-beams, on a diftant lake. Here rife the red beams of war! There, filent, dwells a feeble race! They mark no years with their deeds, as flow they pafs along. Dweller between the fhields! thou that awakeft the failing foul! defcend from thy wall, harp of Cona, with thy voices three! Come with that which kindles the paft: rear the forms of old, on their own dark-brown years!

* U-thorno, hill of ftorms, I behold my race on thy fide. Fingal is bending, in night, over

* The bards, who were always ready to fupply what they thought deficient in the poems of Offian, have inferted a great many incidents between the fecond and third *duän* of Cath-loda. Their interpolations are fo eafily diftinguifhed from the genuine remains of Offian, that it took me very little time to mark them out, and totally to reject them. If the modern Scotch and Irifh bards have fhewn any judgment, it is in afcribing their own compofitions to names of antiquity, for, by that means.

over Duth-maruno's tomb. Near him are the ſteps of his heroes, hunters of the boar. By Turthor's ſtream the hoſt of Lochlin is deep in ſhades. The wrathful kings ſtood on two hills; they looked forward from their boſſy ſhields. They looked forward to the ſtars of night, red-wandering in the weſt. Cruth-loda bends from high, like a formleſs meteor in clouds. He ſends abroad the winds, and marks them with his ſigns. Starno foreſaw, that Morven's king was not to yield in war.

He twice ſtruck the tree in wrath. He ruſhed before his ſon. He hummed a ſurly

means, they themſelves have eſcaped that contempt, which the authors of ſuch futile performances muſt, neceſſarily, have met with, from people of true taſte. I was led into this obſervation, by an Iriſh poem, juſt now before me. It concerns a deſcent made by Swaran, king of Lochlin, on Ireland, and is the work, ſays the traditional preface prefixed to it, of *Oſſian Mac-Fion.* It however appears, from ſeveral pious ejaculations, that it was rather the compoſition of ſome good prieſt, in the fifteenth or ſixteenth century, for he ſpeaks, with great devotion, of pilgrimage, and more particularly, of the *blue-eyed daughters of the convent.* Religious, however, as this poet was, he was not altogether decent, in the ſcenes he introduces between Swaran and the wife of *Congcullion*, both of whom he repreſents as giants. It happening, unfortunately, that *Congcullion* was only of a moderate ſtature, his wife, without heſitation, preferred Swaran, as a more adequate match for her own gigantic ſize. From this fatal preference proceeded ſo much miſchief, that the good poet altogether loſt ſight of his principal action, and he ends the piece, with advice to men, in the choice of their wives, which, however good it may be, I ſhall leave concealed in the obſcurity of the original.

ſong;

ſong; and heard his hair in wind. Turned* from one another, they ſtood, like two oaks, which different winds had bent; each hangs over its own loud rill, and ſhakes its boughs in the courſe of blaſts.

"Annir," ſaid Starno of lakes, "was a fire that conſumed of old. He poured death from his eyes, along the ſtriving fields. His joy was in the fall of men. Blood to him was a ſummer ſtream, that brings joy to withered vales, from its own moſſy rock. He came forth to the lake Luth-cormo, to meet the tall Corman-trunar, he from Urlor of ſtreams, dweller of battle's wing."

The chief of Urlor had come to Gormal, with his dark-boſomed ſhips. He ſaw the daughter of Annir, white-armed Foina-brâgal. He ſaw her! Nor careleſs rolled her eyes, on the rider of ſtormy waves. She fled to his ſhip in darkneſs, like a moon-beam through a nightly vale. Annir purſued along the deep; he called the winds of heaven. Nor alone was the king! Starno was by his ſide.

* The ſurly attitude of Starno and Swaran is well adapted to their fierce and uncomplying diſpoſitions. Their characters, at firſt ſight, ſeem little different; but, upon examination, we find that the poet has dexterouſly diſtinguiſhed between them. They were both dark, ſtubborn, haughty, and reſerved; but Starno was cunning, revengeful, and cruel, to the higheſt degree; the diſpoſition of Swaran, though ſavage, was leſs bloody, and ſomewhat tinctured with generoſity. It is doing injuſtice to Oſſian, to ſay, that he has not a great variety of characters.

ſide. Like U-thorno's young eagle, I turned my eyes on my father.

We ruſhed into roaring Urlor. With his people came tall Corman-trunar. We fought; but the foe prevailed. In his wrath my father ſtood. He lopped the young trees, with his ſword. His eyes rolled red in his rage. I marked the ſoul of the king, and I retired in night. From the field I took a broken helmet: a ſhield that was pierced with ſteel: pointleſs was the ſpear in my hand. I went to find the foe.

On a rock ſat tall Corman-trunar, beſide his burning oak; and near him, beneath a tree, ſat deep-boſomed Foina-brâgal. I threw my broken ſhield before her. I ſpoke the words of peace. "Beſide his rolling ſea, lies Annir of many lakes. The king was pierced in battle; and Starno is to raiſe his tomb. Me, a ſon of Loda, he ſends to white-handed Foina, to bid her ſend a lock from her hair, to reſt with her father, in earth. And thou king of roaring Urlor, let the battle ceaſe, till Annir receive the ſhell, from fiery-eyed Cruth-loda."

* Burſting into tears, ſhe roſe and tore a lock from her hair; a lock, which wandered,

* Oſſian is very partial to the fair ſex. Even the daughter of the cruel Annir, the ſiſter of the revengeful and bloody Starno, partakes not of thoſe diſagreeable characters ſo peculiar to her family. She is altogether tender and delicate. Homer, of all ancient poets, uſes the ſex with leaſt ceremony. His cold contempt is even worſe than the downright abuſe of the moderns; for to draw abuſe implies the poſſeſſion of ſome merit.

in the blaſt, along her heaving breaſt. Corman-trunar gave the ſhell; and bade me to rejoice before him. I reſted in the ſhade of night; and hid my face in my helmet deep. Sleep deſcended on the foe. I roſe, like a ſtalking ghoſt. I pierced the ſide of Corman-trunar. Nor did Foina-brâgal eſcape. She rolled her white boſom in blood.

Why then, daughter of heroes, didſt thou wake my rage?

Morning roſe. The foe were fled, like the departure of miſt. Annir ſtruck his boſſy ſhield. He called his dark-haired ſon. I came, ſtreaked with wandering blood: thrice roſe the ſhout of the king, like the burſting forth of a ſquall of wind from a cloud, by night. We rejoiced, three days, above the dead, and called the hawks of heaven. They came, from all their winds, to feaſt on Annir's foes. Swaran, Fingal is alone *, on his hill of night. Let thy ſpear pierce the king in ſecret; like Annir, my ſoul ſhall rejoice.

"Son of Annir," ſaid Swaran, "I ſhall not ſlay in ſhades, I move forth in light: the hawks ruſh from all their winds. They are wont to trace my courſe: it is not harmleſs thro' war."

* Fingal, according to the cuſtom of the Caledonian kings, had retired to a hill alone, as he himſelf was to reſume the command of the army the next day. Starno might have ſome intelligence of the king's retiring, which occaſions his requeſt to Swaran, to ſtab him; as he foreſaw, by his art of divination, that he could not overcome him in open battle.

Burning rose the rage of the king. He thrice raised his gleaming spear. But, starting, he spared his son; and rushed into the night. By Turthor's stream a cave is dark, the dwelling of Conban-carglas. There he laid the helmet of kings, and called the maid of Lulan; but she was distant far, in Loda's resounding hall.

Swelling in his rage, he strode, to where Fingal lay alone. The king was laid on his shield, on his own secret hill.

Stern hunter of shaggy boars! no feeble maid is laid before thee. No boy, on his ferny bed, by Turthor's murmuring stream. Here is spread the couch of the mighty, from which they rise to deeds of death! Hunter of shaggy boars, awaken not the terrible!

Starno came murmuring on. Fingal arose in arms. "Who art thou, son of night?" Silent he threw the spear. They mixed their gloomy strife. The shield of Starno fell, cleft in twain. He is bound to an oak. The early beam arose. It was then Fingal beheld the king. He rolled awhile his silent eyes. He thought of other days, when white-bosomed Agandecca moved like the music of songs. He loosed the thong from his hands. Son of Annir, he said, retire. Retire to Gormal of shells; a beam that was set returns. I remember thy white-bosomed daughter; dreadful king, away! Go to thy troubled dwelling, cloudy foe of the lovely! Let the stranger shun thee, thou gloomy in the hall!

A tale of the times of old!

C O M A L A:

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

ARGUMENT.

This poem is valuable on account of the light it throws on the antiquity of Oſſian's compoſitions. The Caracul mentioned here is the ſame with Caracalla the ſon of Severus, who in the year 211 commanded an expedition againſt the Caledonians. The variety of the meaſure ſhews that the poem was originally ſet to muſic, and perhaps preſented before the chieſs upon ſolemn occaſions. Tradition has handed down the ſtory more complete than it is in the poem. " Comala, the daughter of Sarno king of Iniſtore or Orkney iſlands, fell in love with Fingal the ſon of Comhal at a feaſt, to which her father had invited him, [Fingal, B. III.] upon his return from Lochlin, after the death of Agandecca. Her paſſion was ſo violent, that ſhe followed him diſguiſed like a youth, who wanted to be employed in his wars. She was ſoon diſcovered by Hidallan the ſon of Lamor, one of Fingal's heroes, whoſe love ſhe had ſlighted ſome time before. Her romantic paſſion and beauty recommended her ſo much to the king, that he had reſolved to make her his wife; when news was brought him of Caracul's expedition. He marched to ſtop the progreſs of the enemy, and Comala attended him. He left her on a hill, within ſight of Caracul's army, when he himſelf went to battle, having previouſly promiſed, if he ſurvived, to return that night." The ſequel of the ſtory may be gathered from the poem itſelf.

COMALA:

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

THE PERSONS.

FINGAL.	MELILCOMA,	daughters
HIDALLAN.	DERSAGRENA,	of Morni.
COMALA.	BARDS.	

DERSAGRENA.

THE chaſe is over. No noiſe on Ardven but the torrent's roar! Daughter of Morni, come from Crona's banks. Lay down the bow and take the harp. Let the night come on with ſongs, let our joy be great on Ardven.

MELILCOMA *.

Night comes apace, thou blue-eyed maid! grey night grows dim along the plain. I ſaw a deer at Crona's ſtream; a moſſy bank he ſeemed through the gloom, but ſoon he bounded away. A meteor played round his

* Melilcoma,—*ſoft-rolling eye.*

branching horns! the awful faces * of other times looked from the clouds of Crona!

DERSAGRENA †.

These are the signs of Fingal's death. The king of shields is fallen! and Caracul prevails. Rise, Comala ‡, from thy rock; daughter of Starno, rise in tears! The youth of thy love is low; his ghost is on our hills.

MELILCOMA.

There Comala sits forlorn! two grey dogs near shake their rough ears, and catch the flying breeze. Her red cheek rests upon her arm, the mountain wind is in her hair. She turns her blue eyes toward the fields of his promise. Where art thou, O Fingal? the night is gathering around!

COMALA.

O Carun § of the streams! why do I behold

* *Apparent diræ facies, inimicaque Trojæ*
Numina magna deûm. VIRG.

——— dreadful sounds I hear,
And the dire form of hostile gods appear.
DRYDEN.

† Dersagrena, *the brightness of a sun-beam.*
‡ Comala, *the maid of the pleasant brow.*
§ Carun or Cara'on, *a winding river.*—This river retains still the name of Carron, and falls into the Forth some miles to the north of Falkirk.

——— *Gentesque alias cum pelleret armis*
Sedibus, aut victas vilem servaret in usum
Servitii,

hold thy waters rolling in blood? Has the noiſe of the battle been heard; and ſleeps the king of Morven? Riſe, moon, thou daughter of the ſky! look from between thy clouds, riſe that I may behold the gleam of his ſteel, on the field of his promiſe. Or rather let the meteor, that lights our fathers through the night, come, with its red beam, to ſhew me the way to my fallen hero. Who will defend me from ſorrow? Who from the love of Hidallan? Long ſhall Comala look before ſhe can behold Fingal in the midſt of his hoſt; bright as the coming forth of the morning in the cloud of an early ſhower.

HIDALLAN †.

Dwell, thou miſt of gloomy Crona, dwell on the path of the king! Hide his ſteps from mine eyes, let me remember my friend no more. The bands of battle are ſcattered, no

Servitii, hic contenta ſuos defendere fines
Roma ſecurigeris prætendit mœnia Scotis:
Hic ſpe progreſſus poſita, Caronis ad undam
Terminus Auſonii ſignat divortia regni.

BUCHANAN.

† Hidallan was ſent by Fingal to give notice to Comala of his return; he, to revenge himſelf on her for ſlighting his love ſome time before, told her that the king was killed in battle. He even pretended that he carried his body from the field to be buried in her preſence; and this circumſtance makes it probable that the poem was preſented of old.

 crowding

crowding tread is round the noiſe of his ſteel. O Carun! roll thy ſtreams of blood, the chief of the people is low.

COMALA.

Who fell on Carun's ſounding banks, ſon of the cloudy night? Was he white as the ſnow of Ardven? Blooming as the bow of the ſhower? Was his hair like the miſt of the hill, ſoft and curling in the day of the ſun? Was he like the thunder of heaven in battle? Fleet as the roe of the deſart?

HIDALLAN.

O that I might behold his love, fair-leaning from her rock! Her red eye dim in tears, her bluſhing cheek half hid in her locks! Blow, O gentle breeze! lift thou the heavy locks of the maid, that I may behold her white arm, her lovely cheek in her grief.

COMALA.

And is the ſon of Comhal fallen, chief of the mournful tale? The thunder rolls on the hill! The lightning flies on wings of fire! They frighten not Comala; for Fingal is low. Say, chief of the mournful tale, fell the breaker of the ſhields?

HIDALLAN,

HIDALLAN.

The nations are ſcattered on their hills! they ſhall hear the voice of the king no more.

COMALA.

Confuſion purſue thee over thy plains! Ruin overtake thee, thou king of the world! Few be thy ſteps to thy grave; and let one virgin mourn thee! Let her be like Comala, tearful in the days of her youth! Why haſt thou told me, Hidallan, that my hero fell? I might have hoped a little while his return, I might have thought I ſaw him on the diſtant rock; a tree might have deceived me with his appearance; the wind of the hill might have been the ſound of his horn in mine ear. O that I were on the banks of Carun! that my tears might be warm on his cheek!

HIDALLAN.

He lies not on the banks of Carun: on Ardven heroes raiſe his tomb. Look on them, O moon! from thy clouds; be thy beam bright on his breaſt, that Comala may behold him in the light of his armour.

COMALA.

Stop, ye ſons of the grave, till I behold my love! He left me at the chaſe alone. I knew

not that he went to war. He ſaid he would return with the night; the king of Morven is returned! Why didſt thou not tell me that he would fall, O trembling dweller of the rock *! Thou ſaweſt him in the blood of his youth; but thou didſt not tell Comala!

MELILCOMA.

What ſound is that on Ardven? Who is that bright in the vale? Who comes like the ſtrength of rivers, when their crowded waters glitter to the moon?

COMALA.

Who is it but the foe of Comala, the ſon of the king of the world! Ghoſt of Fingal! do thou, from thy cloud, direct Comala's bow. Let him fall like the hart of the deſart. It is Fingal in the crowd of his ghoſts. Why doſt thou come, my love, to frighten and pleaſe my ſoul?

FINGAL.

Raiſe, ye bards, the ſong; raiſe the wars of the ſtreamy Carun! Caracul has fled from our arms along the fields of his pride. He ſets far diſtant like a meteor, that incloſes a ſpirit

* By *the dweller of the rock* ſhe means a druid. It is probable that ſome of the order of the druids remained as late as the beginning of the reign of Fingal; and that Comála had conſulted one of them concerning the event of the war with Caracul.

of

of night, when the winds drive it over the heath, and the dark woods are gleaming around. I heard a voice, or was it the breeze of my hills? Is it the huntreſs of Ardven, the white-handed daughter of Sarno? Look from thy rocks, my love; let me hear the voice of Comala!

COMALA.

Take me to the cave of thy reſt, O lovely ſon of death!

FINGAL.

Come to the cave of my reſt. The ſtorm is paſt, the ſun is on our fields. Come to the cave of my reſt, huntreſs of echoing Ardven!

COMALA.

He is returned with his fame! I feel the right hand of his wars! But I muſt reſt beſide the rock till my ſoul returns from my fear! O let the harp be near! raiſe the ſong, ye daughters of Morni!

DERSAGRENA.

Comala has ſlain three deer on Ardven, the fire aſcends on the rock; go to the feaſt of Comala, king of the woody Morven!

FINGAL.

FINGAL.

Raiſe, ye ſons of ſong, the wars of the ſtreamy Carun; that my white-handed maid may rejoice: while I behold the feaſt of my love.

BARDS.

Roll, ſtreamy Carun, roll in joy, the ſons of battle are fled! The ſteed is not ſeen on our fields; the wings * of their pride ſpread in other lands. The ſun will now riſe in peace, and the ſhadows deſcend in joy. The voice of the chaſe will be heard; the ſhields hang in the hall. Our delight will be in the war of the ocean, our hands ſhall grow red in the blood of Lochlin. Roll, ſtreamy Carun, roll in joy, the ſons of battle fled!

MELILCOMA.

Deſcend, ye light miſts from high! Ye moon-beams, lift her ſoul! Pale lies the maid at the rock! Comala is no more!

FINGAL.

Is the daughter of Sarno dead; the white-boſomed maid of my love? Meet me, Comala, on my heaths, when I ſit alone at the ſtreams of my hills!

* Perhaps the poet alludes to the Roman eagle.

HIDALLAN.

HIDALLAN.

Ceaſed the voice of the huntreſs of Ardven? Why did I trouble the ſoul of the maid? When ſhall I ſee thee, with joy, in the chaſe of the dark-brown hinds?

FINGAL.

Youth of the gloomy brow! no more ſhalt thou feaſt in my halls. Thou ſhalt not purſue my chaſe, my foes ſhall not fall by thy ſword *. Lead me to the place of her reſt, that I may behold her beauty. Pale ſhe lies at the rock, the cold winds lift her hair. Her bow-ſtring ſounds in the blaſt, her arrow was broken in her fall. Raiſe the praiſe of the daughter of Sarno! give her name to the winds of heaven.

BARDS.

See! meteors gleam around the maid! See! moon-beams lift her ſoul! Around her, from their clouds, bend the awful faces of her fathers; Sarno † of the gloomy brow! the red-rolling eyes of Fidallan! When ſhall thy white hand ariſe? When ſhall thy voice be heard on our rocks? The maids ſhall ſeek thee

* The ſequel of the ſtory of Hidallan is introduced in another poem.

† Sarno the father of Comala died ſoon after the flight of his daughter. Fidallan was the firſt king that reigned in Iniſtore.

on

on the heath, but they ſhall not find thee. Thou ſhalt come, at times, to their dreams, to ſettle peace in their ſoul. Thy voice ſhall remain in their ears, they ſhall think with joy on the dreams of their reſt. Meteors gleam around the maid, and moon-beams lift her ſoul!

CARRIC-THURA:

A

P O E M.

ARGUMENT.

Fingal, returning from an expedition which he had made into the Roman province, resolved to visit Cathulla king of Inistore, and brother to Comála, whose story is related at large in the preceding dramatic poem. Upon his coming in sight of Carric-thura, the palace of Cathulla, he observed a flame on its top, which, in those days, was a signal of distress. The wind drove him into a bay, at some distance from Carric-thura, and he was obliged to pass the night on the shore. Next day he attacked the army of Frothal king of Sora, who had besieged Cathulla in his palace of Carric-thura, and took Frothal himself prisoner, after he had engaged him in a signal combat. The deliverance of Carric-thura is the subject of the poem; but several other episodes are interwoven with it. It appears from tradition, that this poem was addressed to a Culdee, or one of the first Christian missionaries, and that the story of the *Spirit of Loda*, supposed to be the ancient Odin of Scandinavia, was introduced by Ossian in opposition to the Culdee's doctrine. Be this as it will, it lets us into Ossian's notions of a superior being; and shews that he was not addicted to the superstition which prevailed all the world over, before the introduction of Christianity.

CARRIC-THURA:

A

POEM.

HAST * thou left thy blue courfe in heaven, golden-haired fon of the fky! The weft has opened its gates; the bed of thy repofe is there. The waves come to behold thy beauty. They lift their trembling heads. They fee thee lovely in thy fleep; they fhrink away with fear. Reft, in thy fhadowy cave, O fun! let thy return be in joy.

But let a thoufand lights arife to the found of the harps of Selma: let the beam fpread in the hall, the king of fhells is returned! The ftrife of Carun is paft †, like founds that are no more. Raife the fong, O bards! the king is returned, with his fame!

* The fong of Ullin, with which the poem opens, is in a lyric meafure. It was ufual with Fingal, when he returned from his expeditions, to fend his bards finging before him. This fpecies of triumph is called by Offian, the *fong of victory*.

† Offian has celebrated the *ftrife of Crona*, in a particular poem. This poem is connected with it, but it was impoffible for the tranflator to procure that part which relates to Crona, with any degree of purity.

Such were the words of Ullin, when Fingal returned from war: when he returned in the fair bluſhing of youth, with all his heavy locks. His blue arms were on the hero; like a light cloud on the ſun, when he moves in his robes of miſt, and ſhews but half his beams. His heroes followed the king: the feaſt of ſhells is ſpread. Fingal turns to his bards, and bids the ſong to riſe.

Voices of echoing Cona! he ſaid, O bards of other times! Ye, on whoſe ſouls the blue hoſts of our fathers riſe! ſtrike the harp in my hall; and let me hear the ſong. Pleaſant is the joy of grief; it is like the ſhower of ſpring, when it ſoftens the branch of the oak, and the young leaf rears its green head. Sing on, O bards! to-morrow we lift the ſail. My blue courſe is through the ocean, to Carric-thura's walls; the moſſy walls of Sarno, where Comála dwelt. There the noble Cathulla ſpreads the feaſt of ſhells. The boars of his woods are many; the ſound of the chaſe ſhall ariſe!

Cronnan *, ſon of the ſong! ſaid Ullin, Minona, graceful at the harp! raiſe the tale of Shilric, to pleaſe the king of Morven. Let

* One ſhould think that the parts of Shilric and Vinvela were repreſented by Cronnan and Minona, whoſe very names denote that they were ſingers, who performed in public. Cronnon ſignifies *a mournful ſound*, Minona, or Min-'ònn, *ſoft air*. All the dramatic poems of Oſſian appear to have been preſented before Fingal, upon ſolemn occaſions.

Vinvela

Vinvela come in her beauty, like the ſhowery bow, when it ſhews its lovely head on the lake, and the ſetting ſun is bright. She comes, O Fingal! her voice is ſoft but ſad.

VINVELA.

My love is a ſon of the hill. He purſues the flying deer. His grey dogs are panting around him; his bow-ſtring ſounds in the wind. Doſt thou reſt by the fount of the rock, or by the noiſe of the mountain-ſtream? the ruſhes are nodding to the wind, the miſt flies over the hill. I will approach my love unſeen; I will behold him from the rock. Lovely I ſaw thee firſt by the aged oak of Branno *; thou wert returning tall from the chaſe; the faireſt among thy friends.

SHILRIC.

What voice is that I hear? that voice like the ſummer-wind! I ſit not by the nodding ruſhes! I hear not the fount of the rock. Afar, Vinvela †, afar, I go to the wars of Fingal. My dogs attend me no more. No more

* Bran, or Branno, ſignifies a *mountain-ſtream*: it is here ſome river known by that name, in the days of Oſſian. There are ſeveral ſmall rivers in the north of Scotland ſtill retaining the name of Bran; in particular one which falls into the Tay at Dunkeld.

† Bhín bheul, *a woman with a melodious voice*. *Bh* in the Galic language has the ſame ſound with the *v* in Engliſh.

I tread the hill. No more from on high I fee thee, fair moving by the ftream of the plain; bright as the bow of heaven; as the moon on the weftern wave.

VINVELA.

Then thou art gone, O Shilric! I am alone on the hill! The deer are feen on the brow; void of fear they graze along. No more they dread the wind; no more the ruftling tree. The hunter is far removed; he is in the field of graves. Strangers! fons of the waves! fpare my lovely Shilric!

SHILRIC.

If fall I muft in the field, raife high my grave, Vinvela. Grey ftones, and heaped-up earth, fhall mark me to future times. When the hunter fhall fit by the mound, and produce his food at noon, "Some warrior refts here," he will fay; and my fame fhall live in his praife. Remember me, Vinvela, when low on earth I lie!

VINVELA.

Yes! I will remember thee; alas! my Shilric will fall! What fhall I do, my love! when thou art for ever gone? Through thefe hills I will go at noon: I will go through the filent heath. There I will fee the place of thy reft, returning from the chafe. Alas! my

my Shilric will fall; but I will remember Shilric.

And I remember the chief, ſaid the king of woody Morven; he conſumed the battle in his rage. But now my eyes behold him not. I met him, one day, on the hill; his cheek was pale; his brow was dark. The ſigh was frequent in his breaſt: his ſteps were towards the deſart. But now he is not in the crowd of my chiefs, when the ſounds of my ſhields ariſe. Dwells he in the narrow houſe *, the chief of high Carmora †?

Cronnan! ſaid Ullin of other times, raiſe the ſong of Shilric; when he returned to his hills, and Vinvela was no more. He leaned on her grey moſſy ſtone; he thought Vinvela lived. He ſaw her fair moving ‡ on the plain: but the bright form laſted not: the ſun-beam fled from the field, and ſhe was ſeen no more. Hear the ſong of Shilric, it is ſoft but ſad!

I ſit by the moſſy fountain; on the top of the hill of winds. One tree is ruſtling above me. Dark waves roll over the heath. The lake is troubled below. The deer deſcend from the hill. No hunter at a diſtance is ſeen. It

* The grave.

† Carn-mór, *high rocky hill.*

‡ The diſtinction which the ancient Scots made between good and bad ſpirits, was, that the former appeared ſometimes in the day-time in lonely unfrequented places, but the latter never but by night, and in a diſmal gloomy ſcene.

is mid-day: but all is ſilent. Sad are my thoughts alone. Didſt thou but appear, O my love! a wanderer on the heath! thy hair floating on the wind behind thee; thy boſom heaving on the ſight; thine eyes full of tears for thy friends, whom the miſt of the hill had concealed! Thee I would comfort, my love, and bring thee to thy father's houſe!

But is it ſhe that there appears, like a beam of light on the heath? bright as the moon in autumn, as the ſun in a ſummer-ſtorm, comeſt thou, O maid, over rocks, over mountains to me? She ſpeaks: but how weak her voice! like the breeze in the reeds of the lake.

"Returneſt thou ſafe from the war? Where are thy friends, my love? I heard of thy death on the hill; I heard and mourned thee, Shilric! Yes, my fair, I return; but I alone of my race. Thou ſhalt ſee them no more: their graves I raiſed on the plain But why art thou on the deſert hill? Why on the heath alone?

"Alone I am, O Shilric! alone in the winter-houſe. With grief for thee I fell. Shilric, I am pale in the tomb."

She fleets, ſhe ſails away; as miſt before the wind! and wilt thou not ſtay, Vinvela? Stay and behold my tears! fair thou appeareſt, Vinvela! fair thou waſt, when alive!

By the moſſy fountain I will ſit; on the top of the hill of winds. When mid-day is ſilent around, O talk with me, Vinvela! come on the light-winged gale! on the breeze of

the defert, come! Let me hear thy voice, as thou paffeft, when mid-day is filent around!

Such was the fong of Cronnan, on the night of Selma's joy. But morning rofe in the eaft; the blue waters rolled in light. Fingal bade his fails to rife; the winds came ruftling from their hills. Iniftore rofe to fight, and Carric-thura's moffy towers! But the fign of diftrefs was on their top: the warning flame edged with fmoke. The king of Morven ftruck his breaft: he affumed, at once, his fpear. His darkened brow bends forward to the coaft: he looks back to the lagging winds. His hair is difordered on his back. The filence of the king is terrible!

Night came down on the fea; Rotha's bay received the fhip. A rock bends along the coaft with all its echoing wood. On the top is the circle * of Loda, the moffy ftone of power! A narrow plain fpreads beneath, covered with grafs and aged trees, which the midnight winds, in their wrath, had torn from the fhaggy rock. The blue courfe of a ftream is there! the lonely blaft of ocean purfues the thiftle's beard. The flame of three oaks arofe: the feaft is fpread around: but the foul of the king is fad, for Carric-thura's chief diftreft.

The wan, cold moon rofe, in the eaft. Sleep defcended on the youths! Their blue helmets

* *The circle of Loda* is fuppofed to be a place of worfhip among the Scandinavians, as the fpirit of Loda is thought to be the fame with their god Odin.

glitter to the beam; the fading fire decays. But ſleep did not reſt on the king: he roſe in the midſt of his arms, and ſlowly aſcended the hill, to behold the flame of Starno's tower.

The flame was dim and diſtant; the moon hid her red face in the eaſt. A blaſt came from the mountain, on its wings was the ſpirit of Loda. He came to his place in his terrors *, and ſhook his duſky ſpear. His eyes appear like flames in his dark face; his voice is like diſtant thunder. Fingal advanced his ſpear in night, and raiſed his voice on high.

Son of night, retire: call thy winds, and fly! Why doſt thou come to my preſence, with thy ſhadowy arms? Do I fear thy gloomy form, ſpirit of diſmal Loda? Weak is thy ſhield of clouds; feeble is that meteor, thy ſword! The blaſt rolls them together; and thou thyſelf art loſt. Fly from my preſence, ſon of night! call thy winds and fly!

Doſt thou force me from my place? replied the hollow voice. The people bend before me. I turn the battle in the field of the brave, I look on the nations, and they vaniſh: my noſtrils pour the blaſt of death. I come abroad on the winds; the tempeſts are before my face. But my dwelling is calm, above the clouds; the fields of my reſt are pleaſant.

Dwell in thy pleaſant fields, ſaid the king: Let Comhal's ſon be forgot. Do my ſteps aſcend, from my hills, into thy peaceful plains?

* He is deſcribed, in a ſimile, in the poem concerning the death of Cuchullin.

Do

Do I meet thee, with a ſpear, on thy cloud, ſpirit of diſmal Loda? Why then doſt thou frown on me? why ſhake thine airy ſpear? Thou frowneſt in vain: I never fled from the mighty in war. And ſhall the ſons of the wind frighten the king of Morven? No: he knows the weakneſs of their arms!

Fly to thy land, replied the form: receive the wind, and fly! The blaſts are in the hollow of my hand: the courſe of the ſtorm is mine. The king of Sora is my ſon, he bends at the ſtone of my power. His battle is around Carric-thura; and he will prevail! Fly to thy land, ſon of Comhal, or feel my flaming wrath!

He lifted high his ſhadowy ſpear! He bent forward his dreadful height. Fingal, advancing, drew his ſword; the blade of dark-brown Luno*. The gleaming path of the ſteel winds through the gloomy ghoſt. The form fell ſhapeleſs into air, like a column of ſmoke, which the ſtaff of the boy diſturbs, as it riſes from the half-extinguiſhed furnace.

The ſpirit of Loda ſhrieked, as, rolled into himſelf, he roſe on the wind. Iniſtore ſhook at the ſound. The waves heard it on the deep. They ſtopped, in their courſe, with fear: the friends of Fingal ſtarted, at once; and took their heavy ſpears. They miſſed the king: they roſe in rage; all their arms reſound!

* The famous ſword of Fingal, made by Lun, or Luno, a ſmith of Lochlin.

The moon came forth in the eaſt. Fingal returned in the gleam of his arms. The joy of his youth was great, their ſouls ſettled as a ſea from a ſtorm. Ullin raiſed the ſong of gladneſs. The hills of Iniſtore rejoiced. The flame of the oak aroſe; and the tales of heroes are told.

But Frothal, Sora's wrathful king, ſits in ſadneſs beneath a tree. The hoſt ſpreads around Carric-thura. He looks towards the walls with rage. He longs for the blood of Cathulla, who, once, overcame him in war. When Annir reigned * in Sora, the father of ſea-borne Frothal, a ſtorm aroſe on the ſea, and carried Frothal to Iniſtore. Three days he feaſted in Sarno's halls, and ſaw the ſlow rolling eyes of Comála. He loved her in the flame of youth, and ruſhed to ſeize the white-armed maid. Cathulla met the chief. The gloomy battle roſe. Frothal was bound in the hall; three days he pined alone. On the fourth, Sarno ſent him to his ſhip, and he returned to his land. But wrath darkened in his ſoul againſt the noble Cathulla. When Annir's ſtone † of fame aroſe, Frothal came in his ſtrength. The battle burned round Carric-thura, and Sarno's moſſy walls.

* Annir was alſo the father of Erragon, who was king after the death of his brother Frothal. The death of Erragon is the ſubject of *the battle of Lora*, a poem in this collection.

† That is, after the death of Annir. To erect the ſtone of one's fame, was, in other words, to ſay that the perſon was dead.

Morning

Morning roſe on Iniſtore. Frothal ſtruck his dark-brown ſhield. His chiefs ſtarted at the ſound; they ſtood, but their eyes were turned to the ſea. They ſaw Fingal coming in his ſtrength; and firſt the noble Thubar ſpoke. "Who comes like the ſtag of the deſert, with all his herd behind him? Frothal, it is a foe! I ſee his forward ſpear. Perhaps it is the king of Morven, Fingal the firſt of men. His deeds are well known in Lochlin! the blood of his foes is in Starno's halls. Shall I aſk the peace * of kings? His ſword is the bolt of heaven!"

Son of the feeble hand, ſaid Frothal, ſhall my days begin in a cloud? Shall I yield before I have conquered, chief of ſtreamy Tora? The people would ſay in Sora, Frothal flew forth like a meteor; but a darkneſs has met him; and his fame is no more. No: Thubar, I will never yield; my fame ſhall ſurround me like light. No: I will never yield, chief of ſtreamy Tora!

He went forth with the ſtream of his people, but they met a rock: Fingal ſtood unmoved, broken they rolled back from his ſide. Nor did they ſafely fly; the ſpear of the king purſued their ſteps. The field is covered with heroes. A riſing hill preſerved the foe.

Frothal ſaw their flight. The rage of his boſom roſe. He bent his eyes to the ground, and called the noble Thubar. Thubar! my

* Honourable terms of peace.

people are fled. My famed has ceaſed to ariſe. I will fight the king; I feel my burning ſoul! Send a bard to demand the combat. Speak not againſt Frothal's words! But, Thubar! I love a maid; ſhe dwells by Thano's ſtream, the white-boſomed daughter of Herman, Utha with ſoft-rolling eyes. She feared the low-laid Comála; her ſecret ſighs roſe, when I ſpread the ſail. Tell to Utha of harps, that my ſoul delighted in her.

Such were his words, reſolved to fight. The ſoft ſigh of Utha was near! She had followed her hero, in the armour of a man. She rolled her eye on the youth, in ſecret, from beneath her ſteel. She ſaw the bard as he went; the ſpear fell thrice from her hand! Her looſe hair flew on the wind. Her white breaſt roſe, with ſighs. She raiſed her eyes to the king. She would ſpeak, but thrice ſhe failed.

Fingal heard the words of the bard; he came in the ſtrength of his ſteel. They mixed their deathful ſpears: They raiſed the gleam of their arms. But the ſword of Fingal deſcended and cut Frothal's ſhield in twain. His fair ſide is expoſed; half bent he foreſees his death. Darkneſs gathered on Utha's ſoul. The tear rolled down her cheek. She ruſhed to cover the chief with her ſhield; but a fallen oak met her ſteps. She fell on her arm of ſnow; her ſhield, her helmet flew wide. Her white boſom heaved to the ſight; her dark-brown hair is ſpread on earth.

Fingal

Fingal pitied the white-armed maid! he ſtayed the uplifted ſword. The tear was in the eye of the king, as, bending forward, he ſpoke. "King of ſtreamy Sora! fear not the ſword of Fingal. It was never ſtained with the blood of the vanquiſhed; it never pierced a fallen foe. Let thy people rejoice by the native ſtreams. Let the maids of thy love be glad. Why ſhouldeſt thou fall in thy youth, king of ſtreamy Sora?" Frothal heard the words of Fingal, and ſaw the riſing maid: they * ſtood in ſilence, in their beauty: like two young trees of the plain, when the ſhower of ſpring is on their leaves, and the loud winds are laid.

Daughter of Herman, ſaid Frothal, didſt thou come from Tora's ſtreams; didſt thou come, in thy beauty, to behold thy warrior low? But he was low before the mighty, maid of the ſlow-rolling eye! The feeble did not overcome the ſon of car-borne Annir! Terrible art thou, O king of Morven! in battles of the ſpear. But, in peace, thou art like the ſun, when he looks through a ſilent ſhower: the flowers lift their fair heads before him; the gales ſhake their ruſtling wings. O that thou wert in Sora! that my feaſt were ſpread! The future kings of Sora would ſee thy arms and rejoice. They would rejoice at the fame of their fathers, who beheld the mighty Fingal!

* Frothal and Utha.

Son

Son of Annir, replied the king, the fame of Sora's race ſhall be heard! When chiefs are ſtrong in war, then does the ſong ariſe! But if their ſwords are ſtretched over the feeble; if the blood of the weak has ſtained their arms; the bard ſhall forget them in the ſong, and their tombs ſhall not be known. The ſtranger ſhall come and build there, and remove the heaped-up earth. An half-worn ſword ſhall riſe before him; bending above it, he will ſay "Theſe are the arms of the chiefs of old, but their names are not in ſong." Come thou, O Frothal! to the feaſt of Iniſtore; let the maid of thy love be there; let our faces brighten with joy!

Fingal took his ſpear, moving in the ſteps of his might. The gates of Carric-thura are opened wide. The feaſt of ſhells is ſpread. The ſoft ſound of muſic aroſe. Gladneſs brightened in the hall. The voice of Ullin was heard; the harp of Selma was ſtrung. Utha rejoiced in his preſence, and demanded the ſong of grief; the big tear hung in her eye, when the ſoft Crimora * ſpoke. Crimora the daughter of Rinval, who dwelt at Lotha's † roaring ſtream! The tale was long, but lovely; and pleaſed the bluſhing Utha.

* There is a propriety in introducing this epiſode, as the ſituations of Crimora and Utha were ſo ſimilar.

† Lotha was the ancient name of one of the great rivers in the north of Scotland. The only one of them that ſtill retains a name of a like ſound is Lochy, in Inverneſsſhire; but whether it is the river mentioned here, the tranſlator will not pretend to ſay.

CRIMORA.

CRIMORA *.

Who cometh from the hill, like a cloud tinged with the beam of the weſt? Whoſe voice is that, loud as the wind, but pleaſant as the harp of Carril †? It is my love in the light of ſteel; but ſad is his darkened brow! Live the mighty race of Fingal? or what darkens in Connal's ſoul ‡?

CONNAL.

They live. They return from the chaſe, like a ſtream of light. The ſun is on their ſhields. Like a ridge of fire they deſcend the hill. Loud is the voice of the youth! the war, my love, is near! To-morrow the dreadful Dargo comes to try the force of our race. The race of Fingal he defies; the race of battle and wounds!

CRIMORA.

Connal, I ſaw his ſails like grey miſt on the dark-brown wave. They ſlowly came to

* Crimóra, *a woman of a great ſoul.*

† Perhaps the Carril mentioned here is the ſame with Carril the ſon of Kinſena, Cuchullin's bard. The name itſelf is proper to any bard, as it ſignifies *a ſprightly and harmonious ſound.*

‡ Connal, the ſon of Diaran, was one of the moſt famous heroes of Fingal; he was ſlain in a battle againſt Dargo a Briton; but whether by the hand of the enemy, or that of his miſtreſs, tradition does not determine.

land. Connal, many are the warriors of Dargo!

CONNAL.

Bring me thy father's ſhield, the boſſy, iron ſhield of Rinval; that ſhield like the full-orbed moon, when ſhe moves darkened through heaven.

CRIMORA.

That ſhield I bring, O Connal! but it did not defend my father. By the ſpear of Gormar he fell. Thou may'ſt fall, O Connal!

CONNAL.

Fall I may! but raiſe my tomb, Crimora! Grey ſtones, a mound of earth, ſhall ſend my name to other times. Bend thy red eye over my grave, beat thy mournful heaving breaſt. Though fair thou art, my love, as the light; more pleaſant than the gale of the hill; yet I will not here remain. Raiſe my tomb, Crimora!

CRIMORA.

Then give me thoſe arms that gleam; that ſword, and that ſpear of ſteel. I ſhall meet Dargo with Connal, and aid him in the fight. Farewell, ye rocks of Ardven! ye deer! and ye ſtreams of the hill! We ſhall return no more. Our tombs are diſtant far!

"And

"And did they return no more?" said Utha's bursting sigh. "Fell the mighty in battle, and did Crimora live? Her steps were lonely; her soul was sad for Connal. Was he not young and lovely; like the beam of the setting sun?" Ullin saw the virgin's tear, he took the softly-trembling harp: the song was lovely, but sad, and silence was in Carric-thura.

Autumn is dark on the mountains; grey mist rests on the hills. The whirlwind is heard on the heath. Dark rolls the river through the narrow plain. A tree stands alone on the hill, and marks the slumbering Connal. The leaves whirl round with the wind, and strew the grave of the dead. At times are seen here the ghosts of the departed, when the musing hunter alone stalks slowly over the heath.

Who can reach the source of thy race, O Connal! who recount thy fathers? Thy family grew like an oak on the mountain, which meeteth the wind with its lofty head. But now it is torn from the earth. Who shall supply the place of Connal? Here was the din of arms; here the groans of the dying. Bloody are the wars of Fingal, O Connal! it was here thou didst fall. Thine arm was like a storm; thy sword a beam of the sky; thy height, a rock on the plain; thine eyes, a furnace of fire. Louder than a storm was thy voice, in the battles of thy steel. Warriors fell by thy sword, as the thistle by the staff of a boy.

a boy. Dargo the mighty came on, darkening in his rage. His brows were gathered into wrath. His eyes like two caves in a rock. Bright roſe their ſwords on each ſide; loud was the clang of their ſteel.

The daughter of Rinval was near; Crimora bright in the armour of man; her yellow hair is looſe behind, her bow is in her hand. She followed the youth to the war, Connal her much-beloved. She drew the ſtring on Dargo; but erring ſhe pierced her Connal. He falls like an oak on the plain; like a rock from the ſhaggy hill. What ſhall ſhe do, hapleſs maid! He bleeds; her Connal dies! All the night long ſhe cries, and all the day, "O Connal, my love, and my friend!" With grief the ſad mourner dies! Earth here incloſes the lovelieſt pair on the hill. The graſs grows between the ſtones of the tomb; I often ſit in the mournful ſhade. The wind ſighs through the graſs; their memory ruſhes on my mind. Undiſturbed you now ſleep together; in the tomb of the mountain you reſt alone!

And ſoft be their reſt, ſaid Utha, hapleſs children of ſtreamy Lotha! I will remember them with tears, and my ſecret ſong ſhall riſe; when the wind is in the groves of Tora, when the ſtream is roaring near. Then ſhall they come on my ſoul, with all their lovely grief!

Three days feaſted the kings: on the fourth their white ſails aroſe. The winds of the north drove Fingal to Morven's woody land.

But

But the ſpirit of Loda ſat, in his cloud, behind the ſhips of Frothal. He hung forward with all his blaſts, and ſpread the white-boſomed ſails. The wounds of his form were not forgot; he ſtill feared * the hand of the king!

* The ſtory of Fingal and the ſpirit of Loda, ſuppoſed to be the famous Odin, is the moſt extravagant fiction in all Oſſian's poems. It is not, however, without precedents in the beſt poets; and it muſt be ſaid for Oſſian, that he ſays nothing but what perfectly agreed with the notions of the times, concerning ghoſts. They thought the ſouls of the dead were material, and conſequently ſuſceptible of pain. Whether a proof could be drawn from this paſſage, that Oſſian had no notion of a divinity, I ſhall leave to others to determine: it appears, however, that he was of opinion, that ſuperior beings ought to take no notice of what paſſed among men.

C A R T H O N:

A

P O E M.

ARGUMENT.

This poem is complete, and the ſubject of it, as of moſt of Oſſian's compoſitions, tragical. In the time of Comhal the ſon of Trathal, and father of the celebrated Fingal, Cleſsámmor the ſon of Thaddu and brother of Morna, Fingal's mother, was driven by a ſtorm into the river Clyde, on the banks of which ſtood Balclutha, a town belonging to the Britons between the walls. He was hoſpitably received by Reuthámir, the principal man in the place, who gave him Moina his only daughter in marriage. Reuda, the ſon of Cormo, a Briton who was in love with Moina, came to Reuthámir's houſe, and behaved haughtily towards Cleſsámmor. A quarrel enſued, in which Reuda was killed; the Britons, who attended him, preſſed ſo hard on Cleſsámmor, that he was obliged to throw himſelf into the Clyde, and ſwim to his ſhip. He hoiſted ſail, and the wind being favourable, bore him out to ſea. He often endeavoured to return, and carry off his beloved Moina by night; but the wind continuing contrary, he was forced to deſiſt.

Moina, who had been left with child by her huſband, brought forth a ſon, and died ſoon after.—Reuthámir named the child Carthon, *i. e. the murmur of waves*, from the ſtorm which carried off Cleſsámmor his father, who was ſuppoſed to have been caſt away. When Carthon was three years old, Comhal the father of Fingal, in one of his expeditions againſt the Britons, took and burnt Balclutha. Reuthámir was killed in the attack: and Carthon was carried ſafe away by his nurſe, who fled farther into the country of the Britons. Carthon, coming to man's eſtate, was reſolved to revenge the fall of Balclutha on Comhal's poſterity. He ſet ſail from the Clyde, and falling on the coaſt of Morven, defeated two of Fingal's heroes, who came to oppoſe his progreſs. He was, at laſt, unwittingly killed by his father Cleſsámmor, in a ſingle combat. This ſtory is the foundation of the preſent poem, which opens on the night preceding the death of Carthon, ſo that what paſſed before is introduced by way of epiſode. The poem is addreſſed to Malvina the daughter of Toſcar.

C A R T H O N

P O E M.

A TALE of the times of old! The deeds of days of other years!

The murmur of thy ſtreams, O Lora! brings back the memory of the paſt. The ſound of thy woods, Garmallar, is lovely in mine ear. Doſt thou not behold, Malvina, a rock with its head of heath? Three aged pines bend from its face; green is the narrow plain at its feet; there the flower of the mountain grows, and ſhakes its white head in the breeze. The thiſtle is there alone, ſhedding its aged beard. Two ſtones, half ſunk in the ground, ſhew their heads of moſs. The deer of the mountain avoids the place, for he beholds a dim ghoſt ſtanding there *. The mighty lie, O Malvina! in the narrow plain of the rock.

* It was the opinion of the times, that deer ſaw the ghoſts of the dead. To this day, when beaſts ſuddenly ſtart without any apparent cauſe, the vulgar think that they ſee the ſpirits of the deceaſed.

A tale of the times of old! the deeds of days of other years!

Who comes from the land of ſtrangers, with his thouſands around him? the ſun-beam pours its bright ſtream before him; his hair meets the wind of his hills. His face is ſettled from war. He is calm as the evening beam that looks from the cloud of the weſt, on Cona's ſilent vale. Who is it but Comhal's ſon *, the king of mighty deeds! He beholds his hills with joy, he bids a thouſand voices riſe. "Ye have fled over your fields, ye ſons of the diſtant land! The king of the world ſits in his hall, and hears of his people's flight. He lifts his red eye of pride; he takes his father's ſword. Ye have fled over your fields, ſons of the diſtant land!"

Such were the words of the bards, when they came to Selma's halls. A thouſand lights † from the ſtranger's land roſe, in the midſt of the people. The feaſt is ſpread around; the night paſſed away in joy. Where is the noble Cleſsámmor ‡? ſaid the fair-haired Fingal. Where is the brother of Morna, in the hour of my joy? Sullen and dark he paſſes his days in the vale of echoing Lora: but, behold, he comes from the hill, like a

* Fingal returns here, from an expedition againſt the Romans, which was celebrated by Oſſian in a poem called *the ſtriſe of Crona.*

† Probably wax-lights; which are often mentioned as carried, among other booty, from the Roman province.

‡ Cleſſamh mór, *mighty deeds.*

ſteed

ſteed in his ſtrength, who finds his companions in the breeze; and toſſes his bright mane in the wind. Bleſt be the ſoul of Cleſsámmor, why ſo long from Selma?

Returns the chief, ſaid Cleſsámmor, in the midſt of his fame? Such was the renown of Comhal in the battles of his youth. Often did we paſs over Carun to the land of the ſtrangers: our ſwords returned, not unſtained with blood: nor did the kings of the world rejoice. Why do I remember the times of our war? My hair is mixed with grey. My hand forgets to bend the bow: I lift a lighter ſpear. O that my joy would return, as when I firſt beheld the maid; the white-boſomed daughter of ſtrangers, Moina *, with the dark-blue eyes!

Tell, ſaid the mighty Fingal, the tale of thy youthful days. Sorrow, like a cloud on the ſun, ſhades the ſoul of Cleſsámmor. Mournful are thy thoughts, alone, on the banks of the roaring Lora. Let us hear the ſorrow of thy youth and the darkneſs of thy days!

"It was in the days of peace," replied the great Cleſsámmor, "I came in my bounding ſhip, to Balclutha's † walls of towers. The winds had roared behind my ſails, and Clu-

* Moina, *ſoft in temper and perſon.* We find the Britiſh names in this poem derived from the Galic, which is a proof that the ancient language of the whole iſland was one and the ſame.

† Balclutha, *i. e. the town of Clyde*, probably the *Alcluth* of Bede.

tha's * ſtreams received my dark-boſomed ſhip. Three days I remained in Reuthámir's halls, and ſaw his daughter, that beam of light. The joy of the ſhell went round, and the aged hero gave the fair. Her breaſts were like foam on the wave, and her eyes like ſtars of light: her hair was dark as the raven's wing: her ſoul was generous and mild. My love for Moina was great; my heart poured forth in joy.

"The ſon of a ſtranger came; a chief who loved the white-boſomed Moina. His words were mighty in the hall; he often half-unſheathed his ſword. "Where, ſaid he, is the mighty Comhal, the reſtleſs wanderer † of the heath? Comes he, with his hoſt, to Balclutha, ſince Cleſsámmor is ſo bold? My ſoul, I replied, O warrior! burns in a light of its own. I ſtand without fear in the midſt of thouſands, though the valiant are diſtant far. Stranger! thy words are mighty, for Cleſsámmor is alone. But my ſword trembles by my ſide, and longs to glitter in my hand. Speak no more of Comhal, ſon of the winding Clutha!"

* Clutha, or Cluäth, the Galic name of the river Clyde; the ſignification of the word is *bending*, in alluſion to the winding courſe of that river. From Clutha is derived its Latin name, Glotta.

† The word in the original here rendered by *reſtleſs wanderer*, is *Scuta*, which is the true origin of the *Scoti* of the Romans; an opprobrious name impoſed by the Britons on the Caledonians, on account of the continual incurſions into their country.

"The ſtrength of his pride aroſe. We fought; he fell beneath my ſword. The banks of Clutha heard his fall; a thouſand ſpears glittered around. I fought: the ſtrangers prevailed: I plunged into the ſtream of Clutha. My white ſails roſe over the waves, and I bounded on the dark-blue ſea. Moina came to the ſhore, and rolled the red eye of her tears: her looſe hair flew on the wind; and I heard her mournful, diſtant cries. Often did I turn my ſhip; but the winds of the Eaſt prevailed. Nor Clutha ever ſince have I ſeen, nor Moina of the dark-brown hair. She fell in Balclutha, for I have ſeen her ghoſt. I knew her as ſhe came through the duſky night, along the murmur of Lora: ſhe was like the new moon, ſeen through the gathered miſt: when the ſky pours down its flaky ſnow, and the world is ſilent and dark."

Raiſe *, ye bards, ſaid the mighty Fingal, the praiſe of unhappy Moina. Call her ghoſt, with your ſongs, to our hills; that ſhe may reſt with the fair of Morven, the ſun-beams of other days, the delight of heroes of old. I have ſeen the walls of Balclutha, but they

* The title of this poem, in the original, is *Duan na nlaoi*, *i. e.* *The Poem of the Hymns*: probably on account of its many digreſſions from the ſubject, all which are in a lyric meaſure, as this ſong of Fingal. Fingal is celebrated by the Iriſh hiſtorians for his wiſdom in making laws, his poetical genius, and his foreknowledge of events. O'Flaherty goes ſo far as to ſay, that Fingal's laws were extant in his own time.

were

were desolate. The fire had resounded in the halls: and the voice of the people is heard no more. The stream of Clutha was removed from its place, by the fall of the walls. The thistle shook, there, its lonely head: the moss whistled to the wind. The fox looked out from the windows, the rank grass of the wall waved round its head. Desolate is the dwelling of Moina, silence is in the house of her fathers. Raise the song of mourning, O bards! over the land of strangers. They have but fallen before us: for, one day, we must fall. Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy towers to-day; yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes; it howls in thy empty court, and whistles round thy half-worn shield. And let the blast of the desert come! we shall be renowned in our day! The mark of my arm shall be in battle; my name in the song of bards. Raise the song; send round the shell: let joy be heard in my hall. When thou, sun of heaven, shalt fail! if thou shalt fail, thou mighty light! if thy brightness is for a season, like Fingal; our fame shall survive thy beams!

Such was the song of Fingal, in the day of his joy. His thousand bards leaned forward from their seats, to hear the voice of the king. It was like the music of harps on the gale of the spring. Lovely were thy thoughts, O Fingal! why had not Ossian the strength of

thy

thy ſoul? But thou ſtandeſt alone, my father! who can equal the king of Selma?

The night paſſed away in ſong; morning returned in joy. The mountains ſhewed their grey heads; the blue face of ocean ſmiled. The white wave is ſeen tumbling round the diſtant rock; a miſt roſe, ſlowly, from the lake. It came, in the figure of an aged man, along the ſilent plain. Its large limbs did not move in ſteps; for a ghoſt ſupported it in mid-air. It came towards Selma's hall, and diſſolved in a ſhower of blood.

The king alone beheld the ſight; he foreſaw the death of the people. He came, in ſilence, to his hall; and took his father's ſpear. The mail rattled on his breaſt. The heroes roſe around. They looked, in ſilence, on each other, marking the eyes of Fingal. They ſaw battle in his face; the death of armies on his ſpear. A thouſand ſhields, at once, are placed on their arms; they drew a thouſand ſwords. The hall of Selma brightened around. The clang of arms aſcends. The grey dogs howl in their place. No word is among the mighty chiefs. Each marked the eyes of the king; and half aſſumed his ſpear.

Sons of Morven, begun the king, this is no time to fill the ſhell. The battle darkens near us; death hovers over the land. Some ghoſt, the friend of Fingal, has forewarned us of the foe. The ſons of the ſtranger come from the darkly rolling ſea. For, from the water, came the ſign of Morven's gloomy danger.

danger. Let each aſſume his heavy ſpear, each gird on his father's ſword. Let the dark helmet riſe on every head; the mail pour its lightning from every ſide. The battle gathers like a ſtorm; ſoon ſhall ye hear the roar of death.

The hero moved on before his hoſt, like a cloud before a ridge of green fire; when it pours on the ſky of night, and mariners foreſee a ſtorm. On Cona's riſing heath they ſtood: the white-boſomed maids beheld them above like a grove; they foreſaw the death of the youth, and looked towards the ſea with fear. The white wave deceived them for diſtant ſails; the tear is on their cheek! The ſun roſe on the ſea, and we beheld a diſtant fleet. Like the miſt of ocean they came: and poured their youth upon the coaſt. The chief was among them, like the ſtag in the midſt of the herd. His ſhield is ſtudded with gold; ſtately ſtrode the king of ſpears. He moved towards Selma; his thouſands moved behind.

Go, with a ſong of peace, ſaid Fingal; go, Ullin, to the king of ſwords. Tell him that we are mighty in war; that the ghoſts of our foes are many. But renowned are they who have feaſted in my halls; they ſhew the arms * of my fathers in a foreign land: the ſons of

* It was a cuſtom among the ancient Scots, to exchange arms with their gueſts, and thoſe arms were preſerved long in the different families, as monuments of the friendſhip which ſubſiſted between their anceſtors.

the ſtrangers wonder, and bleſs the friends of Morven's race; for our names have been heard afar: the kings of the world ſhook in the midſt of their hoſt.

Ullin went with his ſong. Fingal reſted on his ſpear: he ſaw the mighty foe in his armour: he bleſt the ſtranger's ſon. "How ſtately art thou, ſon of the ſea! ſaid the king of woody Morven. Thy ſword is a beam of fire by thy ſide: thy ſpear is a pine that defies the ſtorm. The varied face of the moon is not broader than thy ſhield. Ruddy is thy face of youth! ſoft the ringlets of thy hair! But this tree may fall; and his memory be forgot! The daughter of the ſtranger will be ſad, looking to the rolling ſea: the children will ſay, "We ſee a ſhip; perhaps it is the king of Balclutha." The tear ſtarts from their mother's eye. Her thoughts are of him who ſleeps in Morven!"

Such were the words of the king, when Ullin came to the mighty Carthon; he threw down the ſpear before him; he raiſed the ſong of peace. "Come to the feaſt of Fingal, Carthon, from the rolling ſea! partake of the feaſt of the king, or lift the ſpear of war! The ghoſts of our foes are many: but renowned are the friends of Morven! Behold that field, O Carthon; many a green hill riſes there, with moſſy ſtones and ruſtling graſs: theſe are the tombs of Fingal's foes, the ſons of the rolling ſea!"

"Doſt thou ſpeak to the weak in arms!" ſaid Carthon, "bard of the woody Morven? Is my face pale for fear, ſon of the peaceful ſong? Why then doſt thou think to darken my ſoul with the tales of thoſe who fell? My arm has fought in battle; my renown is known afar. Go to the feeble in arms, bid them yield to Fingal. Have not I ſeen the fallen Balclutha? And ſhall I feaſt with Comhal's ſon? Comhal! who threw his fire in the midſt of my father's hall! I was young, and knew not the cauſe, why the virgins wept. The columns of ſmoke pleaſed mine eye, when they roſe above my walls! I often looked back, with gladneſs, when my friends fled along the hill. But when the years of my youth came on, I beheld the moſs of my fallen walls: my ſigh aroſe with the morning, and my tears deſcended with night. Shall I not fight, I ſaid to my ſoul, againſt the children of my foes? And I will fight, O bard! I feel the ſtrength of my ſoul."

His people gathered around the hero, and drew, at once, their ſhining ſwords. He ſtands, in the midſt, like a pillar of fire; the tear half-ſtarting from his eye; for he thought of the fallen Balclutha; the crowded pride of his ſoul aroſe. Sidelong he looked up to the hill, where our heroes ſhone in arms; the ſpear trembled in his hand: bending forward, he ſeemed to threaten the king.

Shall I, ſaid Fingal to his ſoul, meet, at once, the youth? Shall I ſtop him in the midſt of

his courſe; before his fame ſhall ariſe? But the bard, hereafter, may ſay, when he ſees the tomb of Carthon; Fingal took his thouſands to battle, before the noble Carthon fell. No: bard of the times to come! thou ſhalt not leſſen Fingal's fame. My heroes will fight the youth, and Fingal behold the war. If he overcomes, I ruſh, in my ſtrength, like the roaring ſtream of Cona. Who, of my chiefs, will meet the ſon of the rolling ſea? Many are his warriors on the coaſt: and ſtrong is his aſhen ſpear!

Cathul * roſe, in his ſtrength, the ſon of the mighty Lormar: three hundred youths attend the chief, the race † of his native ſtreams. Feeble was his arm againſt Carthon, he fell; and his heroes fled. Connal ‡ reſumed the battle, but he broke his heavy ſpear: he lay bound on the field: Carthon purſued his people.

Cleſſámmor! ſaid the king § of Morven, where is the ſpear of thy ſtrength? Wilt thou behold Connal bound; thy friend, at the ſtream of Lora? Riſe, in the light of thy

* Cath-'huil, *the eye of battle.*

† It appears from this paſſage, that clanſhip was eſtabliſhed, in the days of Fingal, though not on the ſame footing with the preſent tribes, in the north of Scotland.

‡ This Connal is very much celebrated, in ancient poetry, for his wiſdom and valour: there is a ſmall tribe ſtill ſubſiſting, in the North, who pretend they are deſcended from him.

§ Fingal did not then know that Carthon was the ſon of Cleſſámmor.

ſteel,

ſteel, companion of valiant Comhal! Let the youth of Balclutha feel the ſtrength of Morven's race. He roſe in the ſtrength of his ſteel, ſhaking his griſtly locks. He fitted the ſhield to his ſide; he ruſhed, in the pride of valour.

Carthon ſtood on a rock; he ſaw the hero ruſhing on. He loved the dreadful joy of his face: his ſtrength, in the locks of age! "Shall I lift that ſpear, he ſaid, that never ſtrikes, but once, a foe? Or ſhall I, with the words of peace, preſerve the warrior's life? Stately are his ſteps of age! lovely the remnant of his years! Perhaps it is the huſband of Moina; the father of car-borne Carthon. Often have I heard, that he dwelt at the echoing ſtream of Lora."

Such were his words, when Cleſsámmor came, and lifted high his ſpear. The youth received it on his ſhield, and ſpoke the words of peace. "Warrior of the aged locks! Is there no youth to lift the ſpear? Haſt thou no ſon to raiſe the ſhield before his father to meet the arm of youth? Is the ſpouſe of thy love no more? or weeps ſhe over the tombs of thy ſons? Art thou of the kings of men? What will be the fame of my ſword ſhould'ſt thou fall?"

It will be great, thou ſon of pride! begun the tall Cleſsámmor. I have been renowned in battle; but I never told my name * to a foe.

* To tell one's name to an enemy was reckoned in thoſe days of heroiſm, a manifeſt evaſion of fighting him:

foe. Yield to me, ſon of the wave, then ſhalt thou know, that the mark of my ſword is in many a field. "I never yielded, king of ſpears! replied the noble pride of Carthon: I have alſo fought in war; I behold my future fame. Deſpiſe me not, thou chief of men! my arm, my ſpear is ſtrong. Retire among thy friends, let younger heroes fight." Why doſt thou wound my ſoul? replied Cleſsámmor with a tear. Age does not tremble on my hand; I ſtill can lift the ſword. Shall I fly in Fingal's ſight; in the ſight of him I love? Son of the ſea! I never fled: exalt thy pointed ſpear.

They fought, like two contending winds, that ſtrive to roll the wave. Carthon bade his ſpear to err; he ſtill thought that the foe was the ſpouſe of Moina. He broke Cleſsámmor's beamy ſpear in twain: he ſeized his ſhining ſword. But as Carthon was binding the chief; the chief drew the dagger of his fathers. He ſaw the foe's uncovered ſide; and opened, there, a wound.

Fingal ſaw Cleſsámmor low: he moved in the ſound of his ſteel. The hoſt ſtood ſilent, in his preſence; they turned their eyes to the king. He came, like the ſullen noiſe of a ſtorm, before the winds ariſe: the hunter

him: for if it was once known, that friendſhip ſubſiſted, of old, between the anceſtors of the combatants, the battle immediately ceaſed; and the ancient amity of their forefathers was renewed. *A man who tells his name to his enemy*, was of old an ignominious term for a coward.

hears it in the vale, and retires to the cave of the rock. Carthon ſtood in his place: the blood is ruſhing down his ſide: he ſaw the coming down of the king; his hopes of fame aroſe *; but pale was his cheek: his hair flew looſe, his helmet ſhook on high: the force of Carthon failed; but his ſoul was ſtrong.

Fingal beheld the hero's blood; he ſtopt the uplifted ſpear. "Yield, king of ſwords! ſaid Comhal's ſon; I behold thy blood. Thou haſt been mighty in battle; and thy fame ſhall never fade." Art thou the king ſo far renowned? replied the car-borne Carthon. Art thou that light of death, that frightens the kings of the world? But why ſhould Carthon aſk? for he is like the ſtream of his hills; ſtrong as a river, in his courſe: ſwift as the eagle of heaven. O that I had fought with the king; that my fame might be great in ſong! that the hunter, beholding my tomb, might ſay, he fought with the mighty Fingal. But Carthon dies unknown; he has poured out his force on the weak.

But thou ſhalt not die unknown, replied the king of woody Morven: my bards are many, O Carthon! Their ſongs deſcend to future times. The children of years to come ſhall hear the fame of Carthon; when they ſit round the

* This expreſſion admits of a double meaning, either that Carthon hoped to acquire glory by killing Fingal; or to be rendered famous by falling by his hand. The laſt is the moſt probable, as Carthon is already wounded.

burning oak *, and the night is ſpent in ſongs of old. The hunter, ſitting in the heath, ſhall hear the ruſtling blaſt; and, raiſing his eyes, behold the rock where Carthon fell. He ſhall turn to his ſon, and ſhew the place where the mighty fought; "There the king of Balclutha fought, like the ſtrength of a thouſand ſtreams."

Joy roſe in Carthon's face: he lifted his heavy eyes. He gave his ſword to Fingal, to lie within his hall, that the memory of Balclutha's king might remain in Morven. The battle ceaſed along the field, the bard had ſung the ſong of peace. The chiefs gathered round the falling Carthon; they heard his words with ſighs. Silent they leaned on their ſpears, while Balclutha's hero ſpoke. His hair ſighed in the wind, and his voice was ſad and low.

"King of Morven, Carthon ſaid, I fall in the midſt of my courſe. A foreign tomb receives, in youth, the laſt of Reuthámir's race. Darkneſs dwells in Balclutha: the ſhadows of grief in Crathmo. But raiſe my remembrance on the banks of Lora: where my fathers dwelt. Perhaps the huſband of Moina will mourn over his fallen Carthon." His words reached the heart of Cleſsámmor: he fell, in ſilence, on his ſon. The hoſt ſtood

* In the north of Scotland, till very lately, they burnt a large trunk of an oak at their feſtivals; it was called *the trunk of the feaſt*. Time had ſo much conſecrated the cuſtom, that the vulgar thought it a kind of ſacrilege to diſuſe it.

 darkened

darkened around: no voice is on the plain. Night came, the moon, from the east, looked on the mournful field: but still they stood, like a silent grove that lifts its head on Gormal, when the loud winds are laid, and dark autumn is on the plain.

Three days they mourned above Carthon; on the fourth his father died. In the narrow plain of the rock they lie; a dim ghost defends their tomb. There lovely Moina is often seen; when the sun-beam darts on the rock, and all around is dark. There she is seen, Malvina! but not like the daughters of the hill. Her robes are from the stranger's land; and she is still alone!

Fingal was sad for Carthon; he commanded his bards to mark the day, when shadowy autumn returned: And often did they mark the day, and sing the hero's praise. "Who comes so dark from ocean's roar, like autumn's shadowy cloud? Death is trembling in his hand! his eyes are flames of fire! Who roars along dark Lora's heath? Who but Carthon, king of swords! The people fall! see! how he strides, like the sullen ghost of Morven! But there he lies a goodly oak, which sudden blasts overturned! When shalt thou rise, Balclutha's joy? When, Carthon, shalt thou arise? Who comes so dark from ocean's roar, like autumn's shadowy cloud?" Such were the words of the bards, in the day of their mourning: Ossian often joined their voice; and added to their song. My soul has been

mournful for Carthon; he fell in the days of his youth: and thou, O Clefsámmor! where is thy dwelling in the wind? Has the youth forgot his wound? Flies he, on clouds, with thee? I feel the fun, O Malvina! leave me to my reft. Perhaps they may come to my dreams; I think I hear a feeble voice! The beam of heaven delights to fhine on the grave of Carthon: I feel it warm around!

O thou that rolleft above, round as the fhield of my fathers! Whence are thy beams, O fun! thy everlafting light? Thou comeft forth, in thy awful beauty; the ftars hide themfelves in the fky; the moon, cold and pale, finks in the weftern wave. But thou thyfelf moveft alone: who can be a companion of thy courfe! The oaks of the mountains fall: the mountains themfelves decay with years; the ocean fhrinks and grows again: the moon herfelf is loft in heaven; but thou art for ever the fame; rejoicing in the brightnefs of thy courfe. When the world is dark with tempefts; when thunder rolls, and lightning flies; thou lookeft in thy beauty, from the clouds, and laugheft at the ftorm. But to Offian, thou lookeft in vain; for he beholds thy beams no more; whether thy yellow hair flows on the eaftern clouds, or thou trembleft at the gates of the weft. But thou art, perhaps, like me, for a feafon, thy years will have an end. Thou fhalt fleep in thy clouds, carelefs of the voice of the morning. Exult then, O fun! in the ftrength of thy youth! Age is dark and un-

lovely; it is like the glimmering light of the moon, when it ſhines through broken clouds, and the miſt is on the hills; the blaſt of north is on the plain, the traveller ſhrinks in the midſt of his journey.

OINA-MORUL:

A

POEM.

ARGUMENT.

After an addreſs to Malvina, the daughter of Toſcar, Oſſian proceeds to relate his own expedition to Fuärfed, an iſland of Scandinavia. Mal-orchol, king of Fuärfed, being hard preſſed in war, by Ton-thormod, chief of Sar-dronlo, (who had demanded, in vain, the daughter of Mal-orchol in marriage), Fingal ſent Oſſian to his aid. Oſſian, on the day after his arrival, came to battle with Ton-thormod, and took him priſoner. Mal-orchol offers his daughter Oina-morul to Oſſian; but he, diſcovering her paſſion for Ton-thormod, generouſly ſurrenders her to her lover, and brings about a reconciliation between the two kings.

OINA-MORUL:

A

POEM.

As flies the unconſtant ſun, over Larmon's graſſy hill; ſo paſs the tales of old, along my ſoul, by night! when bards are removed to their place; when harps are hung in Selma's hall; then comes a voice to Oſſian, and awakes his ſoul! It is the voice of years that are gone! they roll before me, with all their deeds! I ſeize the tales, as they paſs, and pour them forth in ſong. Nor a troubled ſtream is the ſong of the king, it is like the riſing of muſic from Lutha of the ſtrings. Lutha of many ſtrings, not ſilent are thy ſtreamy rocks, when the white hands of Malvina move upon the harp! Light of the ſhadowy thoughts, that fly acroſs my ſoul, daughter of Toſcar of helmets, wilt thou not hear the ſong! We call back, maid of Lutha, the years that have rolled away!

It was in the days of the king, while yet my locks were young, that I marked Con-cathlin *, on high, from ocean's nightly wave. My

* Con-cathlin, *mild beam of the wave*. What ſtar was ſo called of old is not eaſily aſcertained. Some now diſtinguiſh

My courſe was towards the iſle of Fuärfed, woody dweller of ſeas! Fingal had ſent me to the aid of Mal-orchol, king of Fuärfed wild: for war was around him, and our fathers had met, at the feaſt.

In Col-coiled, I bound my ſails; I ſent my ſword to Mal-orchol of ſhells. He knew the ſignal of Albion, and his joy aroſe. He came from his own high hall, and ſeized my hand in grief. "Why comes the race of heroes to a falling king? Ton-thormod of many ſpears is the chief of wavy Sar-dronlo. He ſaw, and loved my daughter, white-boſomed Oina-morul. He fought; I denied the maid; for our fathers had been foes. He came, with battle, to Fuärfed; my people are rolled away. Why comes the race of heroes to a falling king?"

I come not, I ſaid, to look, like a boy, on the ſtrife. Fingal remembers Mal-orchol, and his hall for ſtrangers. From his waves, the

tinguiſh the pole-ſtar by that name. A ſong, which is ſtill in repute, among the ſea-faring part of the Highlanders, alludes to this paſſage of Oſſian. The author commends the knowledge of Oſſian in ſea affairs, a merit, which, perhaps, few of us moderns will allow him, or any in the age in which he lived. One thing is certain, that the Caledonians often made their way through the dangerous and tempeſtuous ſeas of Scandinavia; which is more, perhaps, than the more poliſhed nations, ſubſiſting in thoſe times, dared to venture. In eſtimating the degree of knowledge of arts among the ancients, we ought not to bring it into compariſon with the improvements of modern times. Our advantages over them proceed more from accident, than any merit of ours.

warrior

warrior deſcended, on thy woody iſle, Thou wert no cloud before him. Thy feaſt was ſpread with ſongs. For this my ſword ſhall riſe; and thy foes perhaps may fail. Our friends are not forgot in their danger, though diſtant is our land.

"Deſcendant of the daring Trenmor, thy words are like the voice of Cruth-loda, when he ſpeaks from his parting cloud, ſtrong dweller of the ſky! Many have rejoiced at my feaſt; but they all have forgot Mal-orchol. I have looked towards all the winds; but no white ſails were ſeen. But ſteel * reſounds in my hall; and not the joyful ſhells. Come to my dwelling, race of heroes! dark-ſkirted night is near. Hear the voice of ſongs, from the maid of Fuärfed wild."

* There is a ſevere ſatire couched in this expreſſion, againſt the gueſts of Mal-orchol. Had his feaſt been ſtill ſpread, had joy continued in his hall, his former paraſites would not have failed to reſort to him. But as the time of feſtivity was paſt, their attendance alſo ceaſed. The ſentiments of a certain old bard are agreeable to this obſervation. He, poetically, compares a great man to a fire kindled in a deſert place. "Thoſe that pay court to him, ſays he, are rolling large around him, like the ſmoke about the fire. This ſmoke gives the fire a great appearance at a diſtance, but it is but an empty vapour itſelf, and varying its form at every breeze. When the trunk, which fed the fire, is conſumed, the ſmoke departs on all the winds. So the flatterers forſake their chief, when his power declines." I have choſen to give a paraphraſe, rather than a tranſlation, of this paſſage, as the original is verboſe and frothy, notwithſtanding the ſentimental merit of the author. He was one of the leſs ancient bards, and their compoſitions are not nervous enough to bear a literal tranſlation.

We went. On the harp arofe the white hands of Oina-morul. She waked her own fad tale, from every trembling ftring. I ftood in filence; for bright in her locks was the daughter of many ifles! Her eyes were two ftars, looking forward through a rufhing fhower. The mariner marks them on high, and bleffes the lovely beams. With morning we rufhed to battle, to Tormul's refounding ftream: the foe moved to the found of Ton-thormod's boffy fhield. From wing to wing the ftrife was mixed. I met Ton-thormod in fight. Wide flew his broken fteel. I feized the king in war. I gave his hand, bound faft with thongs, to Mal-orchol, the giver of fhells. Joy rofe at the feaft of Fuärfed, for the foe had failed. Ton-thormod turned his face away, from Oina-morul of ifles?

Son of Fingal, begun Mal-orchol, not forgot fhalt thou pafs from me. A light fhall dwell in thy fhip, Oina-morul of flow-rolling eyes. She fhall kindle gladnefs along thy mighty foul. Nor unheeded fhall the maid move in Selma, through the dwelling of kings!

In the hall I lay in night. Mine eyes were half-clofed in fleep. Soft mufic came to mine ear: It was like the rifing breeze, that whirls, at firft, the thiftle's beard; then flies, dark-fhadowy, over the grafs. It was the maid of Fuärfed wild! fhe raifed the nightly fong; fhe knew that my foul was a ftream, that flowed at pleafant founds. "Who looks," fhe faid, "from

"from his rock, on ocean's cloſing miſt? his long locks, like the raven's wing, are wandering on the blaſt. Stately are his ſteps in grief! The tears are in his eyes! His manly breaſt is heaving over his burſting ſoul! Retire, I am diſtant far; a wanderer in lands unknown. Though the race of kings are around me, yet my ſoul is dark. Why have our fathers been foes, Ton-thormod love of maids!"

"Soft voice of the ſtreamy iſle." I ſaid, "why doſt thou mourn by night? The race of daring Trenmor are not the dark in ſoul. Thou ſhalt not wander, by ſtreams unknown, blue-eyed Oina-morul! Within this boſom is a voice; it comes not to other ears: it bids Oſſian hear the hapleſs, in their hour of woe. Retire, ſoft ſinger by night! Ton-thormod ſhall not mourn on his rock!"

With morning I looſed the king. I gave the long-haired maid. Mal-orchol heard my words, in the midſt of his echoing halls. "King of Fuärfed wild, why ſhould Ton-thormod mourn? He is of the race of heroes, and a flame in war. Your fathers have been foes, but now their dim ghoſts rejoice in death. They ſtretch their hands of miſt to the ſame ſhell in Loda. Forget their rage, ye warriors! it was the cloud of other years."

Such were the deeds of Oſſian, while yet his locks were young: though lovelineſs, with a robe of beams, clothed the daughter of many iſles. We call back, maid of Lutha, the years that have rolled away!

COLNA-DONA:

A

POEM.

ARGUMENT.

Fingal dispatches Ossian and Toscar, the son of Conloch and father of Malvina, to raise a stone on the banks of the stream of Crona, to perpetuate the memory of a victory, which he had obtained in that place. When they were employed in that work, Car-ul, a neighbouring chief, invited them to a feast. They went: and Toscar fell desperately in love with Colna-dona, the daughter of Car-ul. Colna-dona became no less enamoured of Toscar. An incident, at a hunting party, brings their loves to a happy issue.

COLNA-DONA:

POEM.

COL-AMON * of troubled ſtreams, dark wanderer of diſtant vales, I behold thy courſe between trees, near Car-ul's echoing halls! There dwelt bright Colna-dona, the daughter of the king. Her eyes were rolling ſtars; her arms were white as the foam of ſtreams. Her breaſt roſe ſlowly to ſight, like ocean's heaving wave. Her ſoul was a ſtream of light. Who, among the maids, was like the love of heroes?

* Colna-dona ſignifies *the love of heroes*. Col-amon, *narrow river*. Car-ul, *dark eyed*, Col-amon, the reſidence of Car-ul, was in the neighbourhood of Agricola's wall, towards the ſouth. Car-ul ſeems to have been of the race of thoſe Britons, who are diſtinguiſhed by the name of Maiatæ, by the writers of Rome. Maiatæ is derived from two Galic words, MOI, *a plain*, and AITICH, *inhabitants*; ſo that the ſignification of Maiatæ is, *the inhabitants of the plain country*, a name given to the Britons, who were ſettled in the Lowlands, in contradiſtinction to the Caledonians (i. e.) CAEL-DON, *the Gauls of the hills*), who were poſſeſſed of the more mountainous diviſion of North-Britain.

Beneath the voice of the king, we moved to Crona * of the ſtreams, Toſcar of graſſy Lutha, and Oſſian, young in fields. Three bards attended with ſongs. Three boſſy ſhields were borne before us: for we were to rear the ſtone, in memory of the paſt. By Crona's moſſy courſe, Fingal had ſcattered his foes: he had rolled away the ſtrangers, like a troubled ſea. We came to the place of renown: from the mountains deſcended night. I tore an oak from its hill, and raiſed a flame on high. I bade my fathers to look down, from the clouds of their hall; for, at the fame of their race, they brighten in the wind.

I took a ſtone from the ſtream, amidſt the ſong of bards. The blood of Fingal's foes hung curdled in its ooze. Beneath, I placed, at intervals, three boſſes from the ſhields of foes, as roſe or fell the ſound of Ullin's nightly ſong. Toſcar laid a dagger in earth, a mail of ſounding ſteel. We raiſed the mould around the ſtone, and bade it ſpeak to other years.

* Crona, *murmuring*, was the name of a ſmall ſtream, which diſcharged itſelf in the river Carron. It is often mentioned by Oſſian, and the ſcenes of many of his poems are on its banks. The enemies whom Fingal defeated here, are not mentioned. They were, probably, the provincial Britons. That tract of country between the Friths of Forth and Clyde has been, through all antiquity, famous for battles and rencounters between the different nations, who were poſſeſſed of North and South Britain. Stirling, a town ſituated there, derives its name from that very circumſtance. It is a corruption of the Galic name, STRILA, i. e. *the hill, or rock, of contention*.

Oozy

Oozy daughter of ſtreams, that now art reared on high, ſpeak to the feeble, O ſtone! after Selma's race have failed! Prone, from the ſtormy night, the traveller ſhall lay him, by thy ſide: thy whiſtling moſs ſhall ſound in his dreams; the years that were paſt ſhall return. Battles riſe before him, blue-ſhielded kings deſcend to war: the darkened moon looks from heaven on the troubled field. He ſhall burſt, with morning, from dreams, and ſee the tombs of warriors round. He ſhall aſk about the ſtone, and the aged ſhall reply, "This grey ſtone was raiſed by Oſſian, a chief of other years!"

From * Col-amon came a bard, from Carul, the friend of ſtrangers. He bade us to the feaſt of kings, to the dwelling of bright Colna-dona. We went to the hall of harps.

* The manners of the Britons and Caledonians were ſo ſimilar in the days of Oſſian, that there can be no doubt, that they were originally the ſame people, and deſcended from thoſe Gauls who firſt poſſeſſed themſelves of South Britain, and gradually migrated to the North. This hypotheſis is more rational than the idle fables of ill-formed ſenachies, who bring the Caledonians from diſtant countries. The bare opinion of Tacitus (which, by-the-bye, was only founded on a ſimilarity of the perſonal figure of the Caledonians to the Germans of his own time), though it has ſtaggered ſome learned men, is not ſufficient to make us believe, that the ancient inhabitants of North Britain were a German colony. A diſcuſſion of a point like this might be curious, but could never be ſatisfactory. Periods ſo diſtant are ſo involved in obſcurity, that nothing certain can be now advanced concerning them. The light which the Roman writers hold forth is too feeble to guide us to the truth, through the darkneſs which has ſurrounded it.

There Car-ul brightened between his aged locks, when he beheld the ſons of his friends, like two young branches before him.

"Sons of the mighty," he ſaid, "ye bring back the days of old, when firſt I deſcended from waves, on Selma's ſtreamy vale! I purſued Duthmocarglos, dweller of ocean's wind. Our fathers had been foes, we met by Clutha's winding waters. He fled, along the ſea, and my ſails were ſpread behind him. Night deceived me, on the deep. I came to the dwelling of kings, to Selma of high-boſomed maids. Fingal came forth with his bards, and Conloch, arm of death. I feaſted three days in the hall, and ſaw the blue eyes of Erin, Roſcrana, daughter of heroes, light of Cormac's race. Nor forgot did my ſteps depart: the kings gave their ſhields to Car-ul: they hang, on high, in Col-amon, in memory of the paſt. Sons of the daring kings, ye bring back the days of old!"

Car-ul kindled the oak of feaſts. He took two boſſes from our ſhields. He laid them in earth, beneath a ſtone, to ſpeak to the hero's race. "When battle," ſaid the king, "ſhall roar, and our ſons are to meet in wrath. My race ſhall look, perhaps, on this ſtone, when they prepare the ſpear. Have not our fathers met in peace, they will ſay, and lay aſide the ſhield?"

Night came down. In her long locks moved the daughter of Car-ul. Mixed with the harp aroſe the voice of white-armed Colna-dona.

na-dona. Tofcar darkened in his place, before the love of heroes. She came on his troubled foul, like a beam to the dark-heaving ocean : when it burfts from a cloud, and brightens the foamy fide of a wave †.

* * * * * * *
* * * * * * *

With morning we awaked the woods; and hung forward on the path of the roes. They fell by their wonted ftreams. We returned through Crona's vale. From the wood a youth came forward, with a fhield and pointlefs fpear. " Whence," faid Tofcar of Lutha, " is the flying beam? Dwells there peace at Col-amon, round bright Colna-dona of harps?"

" By Col-amon of ftreams," faid the youth, " bright Colna-dona dwelt. She dwelt; but her courfe is now in deferts, with the fon of the king; he that feized with love her foul as it wandered through the hall." " Stranger of tales," faid Tofcar, " haft thou marked the warrior's courfe? He muft fall, give thou that boffy fhield." In wrath he took the fhield. Fair behind it rofe the breafts of a maid, white as the bofom of a fwan, rifing graceful on fwift-rolling waves. It was Colna-dona of harps, the daughter of the king! Her blue eyes had rolled on Tofcar, and her love arofe!

† Here an epifode is entirely loft; or, at leaft, is handed down fo imperfectly, that it does not deferve a place in the poem.

OITHONA:

A

POEM.

ARGUMENT.

Gaul, the son of Morni, attended Lathmon into his own country, after his being defeated in Morven, as related in the preceding poem. He was kindly entertained by Nuäth, the father of Lathmon, and fell in love with his daughter Oithona. The lady was no less enamoured of Gaul, and a day was fixed for their marriage. In the mean time Fingal, preparing for an expedition into the country of the Britons, sent for Gaul. He obeyed, and went; but not without promising to Oithona to return, if he survived the war, by a certain day. Lathmon too was obliged to attend his father Nuäth in his wars, and Oithona was left alone at Dunlathmon, the seat of the family. Dunrommath, lord of Uthal, supposed to be one of the Orkneys, taking advantage of the absence of her friends, came, and carried off, by force, Oithona, who had formerly rejected his love, into Tromáthon, a desert island, where he concealed her in a cave.

Gaul returned on the day appointed; heard of the rape, and sailed to Tromáthon, to revenge himself on Dunrommath. When he landed, he found Oithona disconsolate, and resolved not to survive the loss of her honour. She told him the story of her misfortunes, and she scarce ended, when Dunrommath, with his followers, appeared at the further end of the island. Gaul prepared to attack him, recommending to Oithona to retire, till the battle was over. She seemingly obeyed; but she secretly armed herself, rushed into the thickest of the battle, and was mortally wounded. Gaul pursuing the flying enemy, found her just expiring on the field: he mourned over her, raised her tomb, and returned to Morven. Thus is the story handed down by tradition; nor is it given with any material difference in the poem, which opens with Gaul's return to Dunlathmon, after the rape of Oithona.

OITHONA:

POEM.

DARKNESS dwells around Dunlathmon, though the moon ſhews half her face on the hill. The daughter of night turns her eyes away; ſhe beholds the approaching grief. The ſon of Morni is on the plain: There is no ſound in the hall. No long-ſtreaming beam of light comes trembling through the gloom. The voice of Oithona* is not heard amidſt the noiſe of the ſtreams of Duvranna. "Whither art thou gone in thy beauty, dark-haired daughter of Nuäth? Lathmon is in the field of the valiant, but thou didſt promiſe to remain in the hall till the ſon of Morni returned. Till he returned from Strumon, to the maid of his love! The tear was on thy cheek at his departure; the ſigh roſe in ſecret in thy breaſt. But thou doſt not come forth with ſongs, with the lightly-trembling ſound of the harp!"

* Oi-thóna, *the virgin of the wave.*

Such

Such were the words of Gaul, when he came to Dunlathmon's towers. The gates were open and dark. The winds were bluftering in the hall. The trees ftrowed the threfhold with leaves; the murmur of night was abroad. Sad and filent, at a rock, the fon of Morni fat: his foul trembled for the maid; but he knew not whither to turn his courfe! The fon * of Leth ftood at a diftance, and heard the winds of his bufhy hair. But he did not raife his voice, for he faw the forrow of Gaul!

Sleep defcended on the chiefs. The vifions of night arofe. Oithona ftood, in a dream, before the eyes of Morni's fon. Her hair was loofe and difordered: her lovely eye rolled deep in tears. Blood ftained her fnowy arm. The robe half hid the wound of her breaft. She ftood over the chief, and her voice was feebly heard. "Sleeps the fon of Morni, he that was lovely in the eyes of Oithona? Sleeps Gaul at the diftant rock, and the daughter of Nuäth low? The fea rolls round the dark ifle of Tromáthon. I fit in my tears in the cave! Nor do I fit alone, O Gaul! the dark chief of Cuthal is there. He is there in the rage of his love. What can Oithona do?"

A rougher blaft rufhed through the oak. The dream of night departed. Gaul took his afpen fpear. He ftood in the rage of his foul.

* Morlo, the fon of Leth, is one of Fingal's moft famous heroes. He and three other men attended Gaul on his expedition to Tromáthon.

Often

Often did his eyes turn to the eaſt. He accuſed the lagging light. At length the morning came forth. The hero lifted up the ſail. The winds came ruſtling from the hill; he bounded on the waves of the deep. On the third day aroſe Tromáthon *, like a blue ſhield in the midſt of the ſea. The white wave roared againſt its rocks; ſad Oithona ſat on the coaſt! She looked on the rolling waters, and her tears came down. But when ſhe ſaw Gaul in his arms, ſhe ſtarted, and turned her eyes away. Her lovely cheek is bent and red; her white arm trembles by her ſide. Thrice ſhe ſtrove to fly from his preſence; thrice her ſteps failed as ſhe went!

"Daughter of Nuäth," ſaid the hero, "why doſt thou fly from Gaul? Do my eyes ſend forth the flame of death? Darkens hatred in my ſoul? Thou art to me the beam of the eaſt, riſing in a land unknown. But thou covereſt thy face with ſadneſs, daughter of car-borne Nuäth! Is the foe of Oithona near? My ſoul burns to meet him in fight. The ſword trembles by the ſide of Gaul, and longs to glitter in his hand. Speak, daughter of Nuäth! Doſt thou not behold my tears?"

"Young chief of Strumon," replied the maid, "why comeſt thou over the dark-blue wave, to Nuäth's mournful daughter? Why did I not paſs away in ſecret, like the flower of the rock, that lifts its fair head unſeen, and

* Tróm-thòn, *heavy or deep-ſounding wave.*

ſtrows

ſtrows its withered leaves on the blaſt? Why didſt thou come, O Gaul! to hear my departing ſigh? I vaniſh in my youth; my name ſhall not be heard. Or it will be heard with grief; the tears of Nuäth muſt fall. Thou wilt be ſad, ſon of Morni! for the departed fame of Oithona. But ſhe ſhall ſleep in the narrow tomb, far from the voice of the mourner. Why didſt thou come, chief of Strumon! to the ſea-beat rocks of Tromáthon?"

"I came to meet thy foes, daughter of car-borne Nuäth! The death of Cuthal's chief darkens before me; or Morni's ſon ſhall fall! Oithona! when Gaul is low, raiſe my tomb on that oozy rock. When the dark-bounding ſhip ſhall paſs, call the ſons of the ſea! call them, and give this ſword, to bear it hence to Morni's hall. The grey-haired chief will then ceaſe to look towards the deſert for the return of his ſon!"

"Shall the daughter of Nuäth live?" ſhe replied with a burſting ſigh. "Shall I live in Tromáthon, and the ſon of Morni low? My heart is not of that rock; nor my ſoul careleſs as that ſea; which lifts its blue waves to every wind, and rolls beneath the ſtorm! The blaſt which ſhall lay thee low, ſhall ſpread the branches of Oithona on earth. We ſhall wither together, ſon of car-borne Morni! The narrow houſe is pleaſant to me, and the grey ſtone of the dead: for never more will I leave thy rocks, O ſea-ſurrounded Tromáthon!

thon! Night* came on with her clouds, after the departure of Lathmon, when he went to the wars of his fathers, to the moſs-covered rock of Duthórmoth. Night came on. I ſat in the hall, at the beam of the oak! The wind was abroad in the trees. I heard the ſound of arms. Joy roſe in my face. I thought of thy return. It was the chief of Cuthal, the red-haired ſtrength of Dunrommath. His eyes rolled in ſire: the blood of my people was on his ſword. They who defended Oithona fell by the gloomy chief! What could I do? My arm was weak. I could not lift the ſpear. He took me in my grief, amidſt my tears he raiſed the ſail. He feared the returning Lathmon, the brother of unhappy Oithona! But behold he comes with his people! the dark wave is divided before him! Whither wilt thou turn thy ſteps, ſon of Morni? Many are the warriors of thy foe!"

"My ſteps never turned from battle," Gaul ſaid, and unſheathed his ſword. "Shall I then begin to fear, Oithona! when thy foes are near? Go to thy cave, my love, till our battle ceaſe on the field. Son of Leth, bring the bows of our fathers! the ſounding quiver of Morni! Let our three warriors bend the yew. Ourſelves will lift the ſpear. They are an hoſt on the rock! our ſouls are ſtrong in war!"

Oithona went to the cave. A troubled joy roſe on her mind, like the red path of lightning

* Oithona relates how ſhe was carried away by Dunrommath.

ning

ning on a ſtormy cloud! Her ſoul was reſolved; the tear was dried from her wildly-looking eye. Dunrommath ſlowly approached. He ſaw the ſon of Morni. Contempt contracted his face, a ſmile is on his dark-brown cheek; his red eye rolled, half-concealed beneath his ſhaggy brows!

"Whence are the ſons of the ſea?" begun the gloomy chief. "Have the winds driven you on the rocks of Tromáthon? Or come you in ſearch of the white-handed maid? The ſons of the unhappy, ye feeble men, come to the hand of Dunrommath! His eye ſpares not the weak; he delights in the blood of ſtrangers. Oithona is a beam of light, and the chief of Cuthal enjoys it in ſecret; wouldſt thou come on its lovelineſs, like a cloud, ſon of the feeble hand! Thou mayſt come, but ſhalt thou return to the halls of thy fathers?" "Doſt thou not know me," ſaid Gaul, "red-haired chief of Cuthal? Thy feet were ſwift on the heath, in the battle of car-borne Lathmon; when the ſword of Morni's ſon purſued his hoſt, in Morven's woody land. Dunrommath! thy words are mighty, for thy warriors gather behind thee. But do I fear them, ſon of pride? I am not of the race of the feeble!"

Gaul advanced in his arms; Dunrommath ſhrunk behind his people. But the ſpear of Gaul pierced the gloomy chief; his ſword lopped off his head, as it bended in death. The ſon of Morni ſhook it thrice by the lock; the warriors of Dunrommath fled. The arrows

rows of Morven purſued them : ten fell on the moſſy rocks. The reſt lift the ſounding ſail, and bound on the troubled deep. Gaul advanced towards the cave of Oithona. He beheld a youth leaning on a rock. An arrow had pierced his ſide ; his eye rolled faintly beneath his helmet. The ſoul of Morni's ſon was ſad, he came and ſpoke the words of peace.

"Can the hand of Gaul heal thee, youth of the mournful brow ? I have ſearched for the herbs of the mountains ; I have gathered them on the ſecret banks of their ſtreams. My hand has cloſed the wound of the brave, their eyes have bleſſed the ſon of Morni. Where dwelt thy fathers, warrior ? Were they of the ſons of the mighty ? Sadneſs ſhall come, like night, on thy native ſtreams. Thou art fallen in thy youth !"

"My fathers," replied the ſtranger, "were of the race of the mighty ; but they ſhall not be ſad ; for my fame is departed like morning miſt. High walls riſe on the banks of Duvranna ; and ſee their moſſy towers in the ſtream ; a rock aſcends behind them with its bending pines. Thou mayſt behold it far diſtant. There my brother dwells. He is renowned in battle : give him this glittering helm."

The helmet fell from the hand of Gaul. It was the wounded Oithona ! She had armed herſelf in the cave, and came in ſearch of death. Her heavy eyes are half cloſed ; the

blood

blood pours from her heaving ſide. " Son of Morni!" ſhe ſaid, " prepare the narrow tomb. Sleep grows, like darkneſs, on my ſoul. The eyes of Oithona are dim! O had I dwelt at Duvranna, in the bright beam of my fame! then had my years come on with joy; the virgins would then bleſs my ſteps. But I fall in youth, ſon of Morni! my father ſhall bluſh in his hall!"

She fell pale on the rock of Tromáthon. The mournful warrior raiſed her tomb. He came to Morven; we ſaw the darkneſs of his ſoul. Oſſian took the harp in the praiſe of Oithona. The brightneſs of the face of Gaul returned. But his ſigh roſe, at times, in the midſt of his friends; like blaſts that ſhake their unfrequent wings, after the ſtormy winds are laid!

C R O M A:

A

P O E M.

ARGUMENT.

Malvina the daughter of Toſcar is overheard by Oſſian lamenting the death of Oſcar her lover. Oſſian, to divert her grief, relates his own actions in an expedition which he undertook, at Fingal's command, to aid Crothar the petty king of Croma, a country in Ireland, againſt Rothmar who invaded his dominions. The ſtory is delivered down thus in tradition. Crothar king of Croma, being blind with age, and his ſon too young for the field, Rothmar the chief of Tromlo reſolved to avail himſelf of the opportunity offered of annexing the dominions of Crothar to his own. He accordingly marched into the country ſubject to Crothar, but which he held of Arth or Artho, who was, at the time, ſupreme king of Ireland.

Crothar being, on account of his age and blindneſs, unfit for action, ſent for aid to Fingal king of Scotland; who ordered his ſon Oſſian to the relief of Crothar. But before his arrival Fovargormo, the ſon of Crothar, attacking Rothmar, was ſlain himſelf, and his forces totally defeated. Oſſian renewed the war; came to battle, killed Rothmar, and routed his army. Croma being thus delivered of its enemies, Oſſian returned to Scotland.

CROMA:

POEM.

"IT was the voice of my love! ſeldom art thou in the dreams of Malvina! Open your airy halls, O fathers of Toſcar of ſhields! Unfold the gates of your clouds: the ſteps of Malvina are near. I have heard a voice in my dream. I feel the fluttering of my ſoul. Why didſt thou come, O blaſt! from the dark-rolling face of the lake? Thy ruſtling wing was in the tree; the dream of Malvina fled. But ſhe beheld her love, when his robe of miſt flew on the wind. A ſun-beam was on his ſkirts, they glittered like the gold of the ſtranger. It was the voice of my love! ſeldom comes he to my dreams!"

"But thou dwelleſt in the ſoul of Malvina, ſon of mighty Oſſian! My ſighs ariſe with the beam of the eaſt; my tears deſcend with the drops of night. I was a lovely tree, in thy preſence, Oſcar, with all my branches round me; but thy death came like a blaſt from the

desert, and laid my green head low. The spring returned with its showers; no leaf of mine arose! The virgins saw me silent in the hall; they touched the harp of joy. The tear was on the cheek of Malvina: the virgins beheld me in my grief. Why art thou sad? they said; thou first of the maids of Lutha! Was he lovely as the beam of the morning, and stately in thy sight?"

Pleasant is thy song in Ossian's ear, daughter of streamy Lutha! Thou hast heard the music of departed bards in the dream of thy rest, when sleep fell on thine eyes, at the murmur of Moruth *. When thou didst return from the chase, in the day of the sun, thou hast heard the music of bards, and thy song is lovely! it is lovely, O Malvina! but it melts the soul. There is a joy in grief when peace dwells in the breast of the sad. But sorrow wastes the mournful, O daughter of Toscar! and their days are few! They fall away, like the flower on which the sun hath looked in his strength after the mildew has passed over it, when its head is heavy with the drops of night. Attend to the tale of Ossian, O maid! He remembers the days of his youth!

The king commanded; I raised my sails, and rushed into the bay of Croma; into Croma's sounding bay in lovely Inisfail †. High on the coast arose the towers of Crothar king

* Mor'-ruth, *great stream.*

† *Inisfail*, one of the ancient names of Ireland.

of

of ſpears; Crothar renowned in the battles of his youth; but age dwelt then around the chief. Rothmar had raiſed the ſword againſt the hero; and the wrath of Fingal burned. He ſent Oſſian to meet Rothmar in war, for the chief of Croma was the friend of his youth. I ſent the bard before me with ſongs. I came into the hall of Crothar. There ſat the chief amidſt the arms of his fathers, but his eyes had failed. His grey locks waved around a ſtaff, on which the warrior leaned. He hummed the ſong of other times, when the ſound of our arms reached his ears. Crothar roſe, ſtretched his aged hand, and bleſſed the ſon of Fingal.

"Oſſian!" ſaid the hero, "the ſtrength of Crothar's arm has failed. O could I lift the ſword, as on the day that Fingal fought at Strutha! He was the firſt of men! but Crothar had alſo his fame. The king of Morven praiſed me; he placed on my arm the boſſy ſhield of Calthar, whom the king had ſlain in his wars. Doſt thou not behold it on the wall? for Crothar's eyes have failed. Is thy ſtrength like thy fathers, Oſſian? let the aged feel thine arm!"

I gave my arm to the king; he felt it with his aged hands. The ſigh roſe in his breaſt, and his tears came down. "Thou art ſtrong, my ſon, he ſaid, but not like the king of Morven! But who is like the hero among the mighty in war? Let the feaſt of my hall be ſpread; and let my bards exalt the ſong. Great

is he that is within my walls, ye ſons of echoing Croma!" The feaſt is ſpread. The harp is heard; and joy is in the hall. But it was joy covering a ſigh, that darkly dwelt in every breaſt. It was like the faint beam of the moon ſpread on a cloud in heaven. At length the muſic ceaſed, and the aged king of Croma ſpoke; he ſpoke without a tear, but ſorrow ſwelled in the midſt of his voice.

"Son of Fingal! behold'ſt thou not the darkneſs of Crothar's joy? My ſoul was not ſad at the feaſt, when my people lived before me. I rejoiced in the preſence of ſtrangers, when my ſon ſhone in the hall. But, Oſſian, he is a beam that is departed. He left no ſtreak of light behind. He is fallen, ſon of Fingal! in the wars of his father. Rothmar the chief of graſſy Tromlo heard that theſe eyes had failed; he heard that my arms were fixed in the hall, and the pride of his ſoul aroſe! He came towards Croma; my people fell before him. I took my arms in my wrath, but what could ſightleſs Crothar do? My ſteps were unequal; my grief was great. I wiſhed for the days that were paſt. Days! wherein I fought; and won in the field of blood. My ſon returned from the chaſe; the fair-haired Fovar-gormo*. He had not lifted his ſword in battle, for his arm was young. But the ſoul of the youth was great; the fire of valour burnt in his eyes. He ſaw the diſor-

* Faobhar-gorm, *the blue point of ſteel.*

dered ſteps of his father, and his ſigh aroſe. "King of Croma," he ſaid, "is it becauſe thou haſt no ſon; is it for the weakneſs of Fovar-gormo's arm that thy ſighs ariſe? I begin, my father, to feel my ſtrength; I have drawn the ſword of my youth; and I have bent the bow. Let me meet this Rothmar, with the ſons of Croma: let me meet him, O my father! I feel my burning ſoul!" "And thou ſhalt meet him," I ſaid, "ſon of the ſightleſs Crothar! But let others advance before thee, that I may hear the tread of thy feet at thy return; for my eyes behold thee not, fair-haired Fovar-gormo!" He went, he met the foe; he fell. Rothmar advances to Croma. He who ſlew my ſon is near, with all his pointed ſpears.

This is no time to fill the ſhell, I replied, and took my ſpear! My people ſaw the fire of my eyes; they all aroſe around. Through night we ſtrode along the heath. Grey morning roſe in the eaſt. A green narrow vale appeared before us; nor wanting was its winding ſtream. The dark hoſt of Rothmar are on its banks, with all their glittering arms. We fought along the vale. They fled. Rothmar ſunk beneath my ſword! Day had not deſcended in the weſt, when I brought his arms to Crothar. The aged hero felt them with his hands; and joy brightened over all his thoughts.

The people gather to the hall. The ſhells of the feaſt are heard. Ten harps are ſtrung; five

bards advance, and ſing, by turns *, the praiſe of Oſſian; they poured forth their burning ſouls, and the ſtring anſwered to their voice. The

* Thoſe extempore compoſitions were in great repute among ſucceeding bards. The pieces extant of that kind ſhew more of the good ear, than of the poetical genius of their authors. The tranſlator has only met with one poem of this ſort, which he thinks worthy of being preſerved. It is a thouſand years later than Oſſian, but the authors ſeemed to have obſerved his manner, and adopted ſome of his expreſſions. The ſtory of it is this: Five bards, paſſing the night in the houſe of a chief, who was a poet himſelf, went ſeverally to make their obſervations on, and returned with an extempore deſcription of, night. The night happened to be one in October, as appears from the poem, and in the north of Scotland it has all that variety which the bards aſcribe to it in their deſcriptions.

FIRST BARD.

NIGHT is dull and dark. The clouds reſt on the hills. No ſtar with green trembling beam; no moon looks from the ſky. I hear the blaſt in the wood; but I hear it diſtant far. The ſtream of the valley murmurs; but its murmur is ſullen and ſad. From the tree at the grave of the dead the long-howling owl is heard. I ſee a dim form on the plain! It is a ghoſt! it fades, it flies. Some funeral ſhall paſs this way: the meteor marks the path.

The diſtant dog is howling from the hut of the hill. The ſtag lies on the mountain moſs: the hind is at his ſide. She hears the wind in his branchy horns. She ſtarts, but lies again.

The roe is in the cleft of the rock; the heath-cock's head is beneath his wing. No beaſt, no bird is abroad, but the owl and the howling fox. She on a leafleſs tree; he in a cloud on the hill.

Dark, panting, trembling, ſad, the traveller has loſt his way. Through ſhrubs, through thorns, he goes, along the

The joy of Croma was great: for peace returned to the land. The night came on with ſilence; the morning returned with joy. No foe

the gurgling rill. He fears the rock and the fen. He fears the ghoſt of night. The old tree groans to the blaſt; the falling branch reſounds. The wind drives the withered burs, clung together, along the graſs. It is the light tread of a ghoſt! He trembles amidſt the night.

Dark, duſky, howling, is night, cloudy, windy, and full of ghoſts! The dead are abroad! my friends, receive me from the night.

SECOND BARD.

The wind is up. The ſhower deſcends. The ſpirit of the mountain ſhrieks. Woods fall from high. Windows flap. The growing river roars. The traveller attempts the ford. Hark! that ſhriek! he dies! The ſtorm drives the horſe from the hill, the goat, the lowing cow. They tremble as drives the ſhower, beſide the mouldering bank.

The hunter ſtarts from ſleep, in his lonely hut; he wakes the fire decayed. His wet dogs ſmoke around him. He fills the chinks with heath. Loud roar two mountain ſtreams which meet beſide his booth.

Sad on the ſide of a hill the wandering ſhepherd ſits. The tree reſounds above him. The ſtream roars down the rock. He waits for the riſing moon to guide him to his home.

Ghoſts ride on the ſtorm to-night. Sweet is their voice between the ſqualls of wind. Their ſongs are of other worlds.

The rain is paſt. The dry wind blows. Streams roar, and windows flap. Cold drops fall from the roof. I ſee the ſtarry ſky. But the ſhower gathers again. The weſt is gloomy and dark. Night is ſtormy and diſmal; receive me, my friends, from night.

THIRD BARD.

The wind ſtill ſounds between the hills; and whiſtles through the graſs of the rock. The firs fall from their place.

foe came in darkneſs, with his glittering ſpear. The joy of Croma was great; for the gloomy Rothmar had fallen!

I raiſed

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place. The turfy hut is torn. The clouds, divided, fly over the ſky, and ſhew the burning ſtars. The meteor, token of death! flies ſparkling through the gloom. It reſts on the hill. I ſee the withered fern, the dark-browed rock, the fallen oak. Who is that in his ſhrowd beneath the tree, by the ſtream?

The waves dark-tumble on the lake, and laſh its rocky ſides. The boat is brimful in the cove; the oars on the rocking tide. A maid ſits ſad beſide the rock, and eyes the rolling ſtream. Her lover promiſed to come. She ſaw his boat, when yet it was light, on the lake. Is this his broken boat on the ſhore? Are theſe his groans on the wind?

Hark! the hail rattles around. The flaky ſnow deſcends. The tops of the hills are white. The ſtormy winds abate. Various is the night and cold; receive me, my friends, from night.

FOURTH BARD.

Night is calm and fair; blue, ſtarry, ſettled is night. The winds, with the clouds, are gone. They ſink behind the hill. The moon is up on the mountain. Trees gliſter; ſtreams ſhine on the rock. Bright rolls the ſettled lake; bright the ſtream of the vale.

I ſee the trees overturned; the ſhocks of corn on the plain. The wakeful hind rebuilds the ſhocks, and whiſtles on the diſtant field.

Calm, ſettled, fair is night! Who comes from the place of the dead? That form with the robe of ſnow; white arms, and dark-brown hair! It is the daughter of the chief of the people: ſhe that lately fell! Come, let us view thee, O maid! thou that haſt been the delight of heroes! The blaſt drives the phantom away; white, without form, it aſcends the hill.

The

I raiſed my voice for Fovar-gormo, when they laid the chief in earth. The aged Crothar was there, but his ſigh was not heard. He

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The breezes drive the blue miſt, ſlowly, over the narrow vale. It riſes on the hill, and joins its head to heaven. Night is ſettled, calm, blue, ſtarry, bright with the moon. Receive me not, my friends, for lovely is the night.

FIFTH BARD.

Night is calm, but dreary. The moon is in a cloud in the weſt. Slow moves that pale beam along the ſhaded hill. The diſtant wave is heard. The torrent murmurs on the rock. The cock is heard from the booth. More than half the night is paſt. The houſe-wife, groping in the gloom, rekindles the ſettled fire. The hunter thinks that day approaches, and calls his bounding dogs. He aſcends the hill, and whiſtles on his way. A blaſt removes the cloud. He ſees the ſtarry plough of the north. Much of the night is to paſs. He nods by the moſſy rock

Hark ! the whirlwind is in the wood ! A low murmur in the vale ! It is the mighty army of the dead returning from the air.

The moon reſts behind the hill. The beam is ſtill on that lofty rock. Long are the ſhadows of the trees. Now it is dark over all. Night is dreary, ſilent, and dark ; receive me, my friends, from night.

The CHIEF.

Let clouds reſt on the hills : ſpirits fly, and travellers fear. Let the winds of the woods ariſe, the ſounding ſtorms deſcend. Roar ſtreams and windows flap, and green-winged meteors fly ! riſe the pale moon from behind her hills, or incloſe her head in clouds ! night is alike to me, blue, ſtormy, or gloomy the ſky. Night flies before the beam, when it is poured on the hill. The young day returns from his clouds, but we return no more.

Where

He ſearched for the wound of his ſon, and found it in his breaſt. Joy roſe in the face of the aged. He came and ſpoke to Oſſian. "King of ſpears!" he ſaid, "my ſon has not fallen without his fame. The young warrior did not fly; but met death as he went forward in his ſtrength. Happy are they who die in youth, when their renown is heard! The feeble will not behold them in the hall; or ſmile at their trembling hands. Their memory ſhall be honoured in ſong; the young tear of the virgin will fall. But the aged wither away, by degrees; the fame of their youth, while yet they live, is all forgot. They fall in ſecret. The ſigh of their ſon is not heard. Joy is around their tomb; the ſtone of their fame is placed without a tear. Happy are they who die in youth, when their renown is around them!"

Where are our chiefs of old? Where our kings of mighty name? The fields of their battles are ſilent. Scarce their moſſy tombs remain. We ſhall alſo be forgot. This lofty houſe ſhall fall. Our ſons ſhall not behold the ruins in graſs. They ſhall aſk of the aged, "Where ſtood the walls of our fathers?"

Raiſe the ſong, and ſtrike the harp; ſend round the ſhells of joy. Suſpend a hundred tapers on high. Youths and maids begin the dance. Let ſome grey bard be near me to tell the deeds of other times; of kings renowned in our land, of chiefs we behold no more. Thus let the night paſs until morning ſhall appear in our halls. Then let the bow be at hand, the dogs, the youths of the chaſe. We ſhall aſcend the hill with day; and awake the deer.

CALTHON and COLMAL:

A

P O E M.

ARGUMENT.

This piece, as many more of Offian's compofitions, is addreffed to one of the firft Chriftian miffionaries. The ftory of the poem is handed down, by tradition, thus: In the country of the Britons between the walls, two chiefs lived in the days of Fingal, Dunthalmo, lord of Teutha, fuppofed to be the Tweed; and Rathmor, who dwelt at Clutha, well known to be the river Clyde. Rathmor was not more renowned for his generofity and hofpitality, than Dunthalmo was infamous for his cruelty and ambition. Dunthalmo, through envy, or on account of fome private feuds, which fubfifted between the families, murdered Rathmor at a feaft; but being afterwards touched with remorfe, he educated the two fons of Rathmor, Calthon and Colmar, in his own houfe. They growing up to man's eftate, dropped fome hints that they intended to revenge the death of their father, upon which Dunthalmo fhut them up in two caves on the banks of Teutha, intending to take them off privately. Colmal, the daughter of Dunthalmo, who was fecretly in love with Calthon, helped him to make his efcape from prifon, and fled with him to Fingal, difguifed in the habit of a young warrior, and implored his aid againft Dunthalmo. Fingal fent Offian with three hundred men to Colmar's relief. Dunthalmo having previoufly murdered Colmar, came to a battle with Offian; but he was killed by that hero, and his army totally defeated.

Calthon married Colmal, his deliverer; and Offian returned to Morven.

CALTHON and COLMAL:

A

P O E M.

PLEASANT is the voice of thy ſong, thou lonely dweller of the rock! It comes on the ſound of the ſtream, along the narrow vale. My ſoul awakes, O ſtranger! in the midſt of my hall. I ſtretch my hand to the ſpear, as in the days of other years. I ſtretch my hand, but it is feeble; and the ſigh of my boſom grows. Wilt thou not liſten, ſon of the rock! to the ſong of Oſſian? My ſoul is full of other times; the joy of my youth returns. Thus the ſun appears in the weſt, after the ſteps of his brightneſs have moved behind a ſtorm: the green hills lift their dewy heads: the blue ſtreams rejoice in the vale. The aged hero comes forth on his ſtaff; his grey hair glitters in the beam. Doſt thou not behold, ſon of the rock! a ſhield in Oſſian's hall? It is marked with the ſtrokes of battle; and the brightneſs of its boſſes has failed. That ſhield the great Dunthalmo bore, the chief of ſtreamy Teutha. Dunthalmo bore it in battle, before he

he fell by Offian's fpear. Liften, fon of the rock! to the tale of other years!

Rathmor was a chief of Clutha. The feeble dwelt in his hall. The gates of Rathmor were never fhut; his feaft was always fpread. The fons of the ftranger came. They bleffed the generous chief of Clutha. Bards raifed the fong, and touched the harp: joy brightened on the face of the fad! Dunthalmo came, in his pride, and rufhed into the combat of Rathmor. The chief of Clutha overcame: the rage of Dunthalmo rofe. He came, by night, with his warriors; the mighty Rathmor fell. He fell in his halls, where his feaft was often fpread for ftrangers.

Colmar and Calthon were young, the fons of car-borne Rathmor. They came, in the joy of youth, into their father's hall. They behold him in his blood; their burfting tears defcend. The foul of Dunthalmo melted, when he faw the children of youth. He brought them to Alteutha's * walls; they grew in the houfe of their foe. They bent the bow in his prefence; and came forth to his wars. They faw the fallen walls of their fathers; they faw the green thorn in the hall. Their tears rufhed forth in fecret. At times their faces were fad. Dunthalmo beheld their

* Al-teutha, or rather Balteutha, *the town of Tweed*, the name of Dunthalmo's feat. It is obfervable that all the names in this poem are derived from the Galic language; which is a proof, that it was once the univerfal language of the whole ifland.

grief:

grief: his darkening ſoul deſigned their death. He cloſed them in two caves, on the echoing banks of Teutha. The ſun did not come there with his beams; nor the moon of heaven by night. The ſons of Rathmor remained in darkneſs, and foreſaw their death.

The daughter of Dunthalmo wept in ſilence, the fair-haired, blue-eyed Colmal *. Her eye had rolled in ſecret on Calthon; his lovelineſs ſwelled in her ſoul. She trembled for her warrior; but what could Colmal do? Her arm could not lift the ſpear; nor was the ſword formed for her ſide. Her white breaſt never roſe beneath a mail. Neither was her eye the terror of heroes. What canſt thou do, O Colmal! for the falling chief? Her ſteps are unequal; her hair is looſe: her eye looks wildly through her tears. She came, by night, to the hall †. She armed her lovely form in ſteel; the ſteel of a young warrior, who fell in the firſt of his battles. She came to the cave of Calthon, and looſed the thong from his hands.

"Ariſe, ſon of Rathmor," ſhe ſaid, "ariſe, the night is dark! Let us fly to the king of

* Caol-mhal, *a woman with ſmall eye-brows*; ſmall eye-brows were a diſtinguiſhing part of beauty in Oſſian's time: and he ſeldom fails to give them to the fine women of his poems.

† That is, the hall where the arms taken from enemies were hung up as trophies. Oſſian is very careful to make his ſtories probable; for he makes Colmal put on the arms of a youth killed in his firſt battle, as more proper for a young woman, who cannot be ſuppoſed ſtrong enough to carry the armour of a full-grown warrior.

Selma*, chief of fallen Clutha! I am the ſon of Lamgal, who dwelt in thy father's hall. I heard of thy dark dwelling in the cave, and my ſoul aroſe. Ariſe, ſon of Rathmor, ariſe, the night is dark!" "Bleſt voice!" replied the chief, "comeſt thou from the clouds to Calthon? The ghoſts of his fathers have often deſcended in his dreams, ſince the ſun has retired from his eyes, and darkneſs has dwelt around him. Or art thou the ſon of Lamgal, the chief I often ſaw in Clutha? But ſhall I fly to Fingal, and Colmar my brother low? Will I fly to Morven, and the hero cloſed in night? No; give me that ſpear, ſon of Lamgal, Calthon will defend his brother!"

"A thouſand warriors," replied the maid, "ſtretch their ſpears round car-borne Colmar. What can Calthon do againſt a hoſt ſo great? Let us fly to the king of Morven, he will come with war. His arm is ſtretched forth to the unhappy; the lightning of his ſword is round the weak. Ariſe, thou ſon of Rathmor! the ſhadows will fly away. Ariſe, or thy ſteps may be ſeen, and thou muſt fall in youth!"

The ſighing hero roſe; his tears deſcend for car-borne Colmar. He came with the maid to Selma's hall; but he knew not that it was Colmal. The helmet covered her lovely face. Her boſom heaved beneath the ſteel. Fingal returned from the chaſe, and found the lovely ſtrangers. They were like two beams of light,

* Fingal.

in the midſt of the hall of ſhells. The king heard the tale of grief; and turned his eyes around. A thouſand heroes half-roſe before him; claiming the war of Teutha. I came with my ſpear from the hill; the joy of battle roſe in my breaſt: for the king ſpoke to Oſſian in the midſt of a thouſand chiefs.

"Son of my ſtrength," began the king, "take thou the ſpear of Fingal. Go to Teutha's ruſhing ſtream, and ſave the car-borne Colmar. Let thy fame return before thee like a pleaſant gale; that my ſoul may rejoice over my ſon, who renews the renown of our fathers. Oſſian! be thou a ſtorm in war; but mild when the foe is low! It was thus my fame aroſe, O my ſon! be thou like Selma's chief. When the haughty come to my halls, my eyes behold them not. But my arm is ſtretched forth to the unhappy. My ſword defends the weak."

I rejoiced in the words of the king. I took my rattling arms. Diaran * roſe at my ſide, and Dargo † king of ſpears. Three hundred youths followed our ſteps: the lovely ſtrangers were

* Diaran, father of that Connal who was unfortunately killed by Crimora his miſtreſs.

† Dargo, the ſon of Collath, is celebrated in other poems by Oſſian. He is ſaid to have been killed by a boar at a hunting party. The lamentation of his miſtreſs, or wife, Mingala, over his body, is extant; but whether it is of Oſſian's compoſition, I cannot determine. It is generally aſcribed to him, and has much of his manner; but ſome traditions mention it as an imitation by ſome later

were at my ſide. Dunthalmo heard the ſound of our approach. He gathered the ſtrength of Teutha. He ſtood on a hill with his hoſt. They were like rocks broken with thunder, when their bent trees are ſinged and bare, and the ſtreams of their chinks have failed. The ſtream of Teutha rolled, in its pride, before the gloomy foe. I ſent a bard to Dunthalmo, to offer the combat on the plain; but he

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later bard. As it has ſome poetical merit, I have ſubjoined it.

THE ſpouſe of Dargo comes in tears: for Dargo was no more! The heroes ſigh over Lartho's chief: and what ſhall ſad Mingala do? The dark ſoul vaniſhed like morning miſt, before the king of ſpears: but the generous glowed in his preſence like the morning ſtar.

Who was the faireſt and moſt lovely? Who but Collath's ſtately ſon? Who ſat in the midſt of the wiſe, but Dargo of the mighty deeds?

Thy hand touched the trembling harp: Thy voice was ſoft as ſummer winds. Ah me! what ſhall the heroes ſay? for Dargo fell before a boar. Pale is the lovely cheek; the look of which was firm in danger! Why haſt thou failed on our hills, thou fairer than the beams of the ſun!

The daughter of Adonſion was lovely in the eyes of the valiant; ſhe was lovely in their eyes, but ſhe choſe to be the ſpouſe of Dargo.

But thou art alone, Mingala! the night is coming with its clouds; where is the bed of thy repoſe? Where but in the tomb of Dargo?

Why doſt thou lift the ſtone, O bard! why doſt thou ſhut the narrow houſe? Mingala's eyes are heavy, bard! She muſt ſleep with Dargo.

Laſt night I heard the ſong of joy in Lartho's lofty hall. But ſilence dwells around my bed. Mingala reſts with Dargo.

ſmiled

ſmiled in the darkneſs of his pride. His unſettled hoſt moved on the hill; like the mountain cloud, when the blaſt has entered its womb, and ſcatters the curling gloom on every ſide.

They brought Colmar to Teutha's bank, bound with a thouſand thongs. The chief is ſad, but ſtately. His eye is on his friends; for we ſtood, in our arms, whilſt Teutha's waters rolled between. Dunthalmo came with his ſpear, and pierced the hero's ſide: he rolled on the bank in his blood. We heard his broken ſighs. Calthon ruſhed into the ſtream; I bounded forward on my ſpear. Teutha's race fell before us. Night came rolling down. Dunthalmo reſted on a rock, amidſt an aged wood. The rage of his boſom burned againſt the car-borne Calthon. But Calthon ſtood in his grief; he mourned the fallen Colmar; Colmar ſlain in youth, before his fame aroſe!

I bade the ſong of woe to riſe, to ſooth the mournful chief; but he ſtood beneath a tree, and often threw his ſpear on earth. The humid eye of Colmal rolled near in a ſecret tear: ſhe foreſaw the fall of Dunthalmo, or of Clutha's warlike chief. Now half the night had paſſed away. Silence and darkneſs were on the field. Sleep reſted on the eyes of the heroes: Calthon's ſettling ſoul was ſtill. His eyes were half-cloſed; but the murmur of Teutha had not yet failed in his ear. Pale, and ſhewing his wounds, the ghoſt of Colmar came: he bent his head over the hero, and raiſed his feeble voice!

"Sleeps the ſon of Rathmor in his night, and his brother low? Did we not riſe to the chaſe together? Purſued we not the dark-brown hinds? Colmar was not forgot till he fell, till death had blaſted his youth. I lie pale beneath the rock of Lona. O let Calthon riſe! the morning comes with its beams; Dunthalmo will diſhonour the fallen." He paſſed away in his blaſt. The riſing Calthon ſaw the ſteps of his departure. He ruſhed in the ſound of his ſteel. Unhappy Colmal roſe. She followed her hero through night, and dragged her ſpear behind. But when Calthon came to Lona's rock, he found his fallen brother. The rage of his boſom roſe; he ruſhed among the foe. The groans of death aſcend. They cloſe around the chief. He is bound in the midſt, and brought to gloomy Dunthalmo. The ſhout of joy aroſe; and the hills of night replied.

I ſtarted at the ſound; and took my father's ſpear. Diaran roſe at my ſide; and the youthful ſtrength of Dargo. We miſſed the chief of Clutha, and our ſouls were ſad. I dreaded the departure of my fame. The pride of my valour roſe! "Sons of Morven!" I ſaid, "it is not thus our fathers fought. They reſted not on the field of ſtrangers, when the foe was not fallen before them. Their ſtrength was like the eagles of heaven; their renown is in the ſong. But our people fall by degrees. Our fame begins to depart. What ſhall the king of Morven ſay, if Oſſian conquers not at

Teutha?

Teutha? Riſe in your ſteel, ye warriors! follow the ſound of Oſſian's courſe. He will not return, but renowned, to the echoing walls of Selma."

Morning roſe on the blue waters of Teutha. Colmal ſtood before me in tears. She told of the chief of Clutha: thrice the ſpear fell from her hand. My wrath turned againſt the ſtranger; for my ſoul trembled for Calthon. "Son of the feeble hand!" I ſaid, "do Teutha's warriors fight with tears? The battle is not won with grief; nor dwells the ſigh in the ſoul of war. Go to the deer of Carmun, to the lowing herds of Teutha. But leave theſe arms, thou ſon of fear! A warrior may lift them in fight."

I tore the mail from her ſhoulders. Her ſnowy breaſt appeared. She bent her bluſhing face to the ground. I looked in ſilence to the chiefs. The ſpear fell from my hand; the ſigh of my boſom roſe! But when I heard the name of the maid, my crowding tears ruſhed down. I bleſſed the lovely beam of youth, and bade the battle move!

Why, ſon of the rock, ſhould Oſſian tell how Teutha's warriors died? They are now forgot in their land; their tombs are not found on the heath. Years came on with their ſtorms. The green mounds are mouldered away. Scarce is the grave of Dunthalmo ſeen, or the place where he fell by the ſpear of Oſſian. Some grey warrior, half blind with age, ſitting by night at the flaming oak of the hall, tells

now my deeds to his ſons, and the fall of the dark Dunthalmo. The faces of youth bend ſidelong towards his voice. Surprize and joy burn in their eyes! I found Calthon bound to an oak; my ſword cut the thongs from his hands. I gave him the white-boſomed Colmal. They dwelt in the halls of Teutha.

THE

WAR of CAROS:

A

POEM.

ARGUMENT.

Caros is probably the noted uſurper Carauſius, by birth a Menapian, who aſſumed the purple in the year 284: and, ſeizing on Britain, defeated the Emperor Maximian Herculius in ſeveral naval engagements, which gives propriety to his being called in this poem *the king of ſhips*. He repaired Agricola's wall, in order to obſtruct the incurſions of the Caledonians; and when he was employed in that work, it appears he was attacked by a party under the command of Oſcar the ſon of Oſſian. This battle is the foundation of the preſent poem, which is addreſſed to Malvina the daughter of Toſcar.

THE

WAR of CAROS:

A

POEM.

BRING, daughter of Toſcar! bring the harp! the light of the ſong riſes in Oſſian's ſoul! It is like the field, when darkneſs covers the hills around, and the ſhadow grows ſlowly on the plain of the ſun. I behold my ſon, O Malvina! near the moſſy rock of Crona *. But it is the miſt of the deſart, tinged with the beam of the weſt! Lovely is the miſt, that aſſumes the form of Oſcar! turn from it, ye winds, when ye roar on the ſide of Ardven!

Who comes towards my ſon, with the murmur of a ſong? His ſtaff is in his hand, his grey hair looſe on the wind. Surly joy lightens his face. He often looks back to

* Crona is the name of a ſmall ſtream which runs into the Carron.

Caros. It is Ryno * of ſongs, he that went to view the foe. "What does Caros king of ſhips?" ſaid the ſon of the now mournful Oſſian, "ſpreads he the wings † of his pride, bard of the times of old!" "He ſpreads them, Oſcar," replied the bard, "but it is behind his gathered heap ‡. He looks over his ſtones with fear. He beholds thee terrible, as the ghoſt of night, that rolls the wave to his ſhips!"

"Go, thou firſt of my bards!" ſays Oſcar, "take the ſpear of Fingal. Fix a flame on its point. Shake it to the winds of heaven. Bid him, in ſongs, to advance, and leave the rolling of his wave. Tell to Caros that I long for battle; that my bow is weary of the chaſe of Cona. Tell him the mighty are not here; and that my arm is young."

He went with the murmur of ſongs. Oſcar reared his voice on high. It reached his heroes on Ardven, like the noiſe of a cave; when the ſea of Togorma rolls before it; and its trees meet the roaring winds. They gather round my ſon like the ſtreams of the hill; when, after rain, they roll in the pride of their courſe. Ryno came to the mighty Caros. He ſtruck his flaming ſpear. Come to the battle of Oſcar, O thou that ſitteſt on the rolling

* Ryno is often mentioned in the ancient poetry. He ſeems to have been a Bard, of the firſt rank, in the days of Fingal.

† The Roman eagle.

‡ Agricola's wall, which Carauſius repaired.

of waves! Fingal is diſtant far; he hears the ſongs of bards in Morven: the wind of his hall is in his hair. His terrible ſpear is at his ſide; his ſhield that is like the darkened moon! Come to the battle of Oſcar; the hero is alone!

He came not over the ſtreamy Carun *. The bard returned with his ſong. Grey night grows dim on Crona. The feaſt of ſhells is ſpread. A hundred oaks burn to the wind; faint light gleams over the heath. The ghoſts of Ardven paſs through the beam, and ſhew their dim and diſtant forms. Comala † is half unſeen on her meteor; Hidallan is ſullen and dim, like the darkened moon behind the miſt of night.

"Why art thou ſad?" ſaid Ryno; for he alone beheld the chief. "Why art thou ſad, Hidallan! haſt thou not received thy fame? The ſongs of Oſſian have been heard; thy ghoſt has brightened in wind, when thou didſt bend from thy cloud, to hear the ſong of Morven's bard!" "And do thine eyes," ſaid Oſcar, "behold the chief, like the dim meteor of night? Say, Ryno, ſay, how fell Hidallan, the renowned in the days of my fathers? His name remains on the rocks of Cona. I have often ſeen the ſtreams of his hills!"

* The river Carron.

† This is the ſcene of Comala's death, which is the ſubject of the dramatic poem. The poet mentions her in this place, in order to introduce the ſequel of Hidallan's ſtory, who, on account of her death, had been expelled from the wars of Fingal.

Fingal,

Fingal, replied the bard, drove Hidallan from his wars. The king's ſoul was ſad for Comala, and his eyes could not behold the chief. Lonely, ſad along the heath, he ſlowly moved, with ſilent ſteps. His arms hang diſordered on his ſide. His hair flies looſe from his brow. The tear is in his down-caſt eyes; a ſigh half-ſilent in his breaſt! Three days he ſtrayed unſeen, alone, before he came to Lamor's halls: the moſſy halls of his fathers, at the ſtream of Balva *. There Lamor ſat alone beneath a tree; for he had ſent his people with Hidallan to war. The ſtream ran at his feet, his grey head reſted on his ſtaff. Sightleſs are his aged eyes. He hums the ſong of other times. The noiſe of Hidallan's feet came to his ear: he knew the tread of his ſon.

"Is the ſon of Lamor returned; or is it the ſound of his ghoſt? Haſt thou fallen on the banks of Carun, ſon of the aged Lamor? Or, if I hear the ſound of Hidallan's feet; where are the mighty in the war? where are my people, Hidallan! that were wont to return with their echoing ſhields? Have they fallen on the banks of Carun?"

"No:" replied the ſighing youth, "the people of Lamor live. They are renowned in war, my father! but Hidallan is renowned no more.

* This is perhaps that ſmall ſtream, ſtill retaining the name of Balva, which runs through the romantic valley of Glentivar in Stirlingſhire. Balva ſignifies *a ſilent ſtream*; and Glentivar *the ſequeſtered vale*.

more. I muſt ſit alone on the banks of Balva, when the roar of the battle grows."

"But thy fathers never ſat alone," replied the riſing pride of Lamor. "They never ſat alone on the banks of Balva, when the roar of battle roſe. Doſt thou not behold that tomb? My eyes diſcern it not; there reſts the noble Garmállon, who never fled from war! Come, thou renowned in battle, he ſays, come to thy father's tomb. How am I renowned, Garmállon? my ſon has fled from war!"

"King of the ſtreamy Balva!" ſaid Hidallan with a ſigh, "why doſt thou torment my ſoul? Lamor, I never fled. Fingal was ſad for Comala; he denied his wars to Hidallan. Go to the grey ſtreams of thy land, he ſaid; moulder like a leafleſs oak, which the winds have bent over Balva, never more to grow!"

"And muſt I hear," Lamor replied, "the lonely tread of Hidallan's feet? When thouſands are renowned in battle, ſhall he bend over my grey ſtreams? Spirit of the noble Garmállon! carry Lamor to his place; his eyes are dark; his ſoul is ſad; his ſon has loſt his fame!"

"Where," ſaid the youth, "ſhall I ſearch for fame, to gladden the ſoul of Lamor? From whence ſhall I return with renown, that the ſound of my arms may be pleaſant in his ear? If I go to the chaſe of hinds, my name will not be heard. Lamor will not feel my dogs, with his hands, glad at my arrival from the

hill. He will not inquire of his mountains, or of the dark-brown deer of his desarts!"

"I must fall," said Lamor, "like a leafless oak: it grew on a rock! it was overturned by the winds! My ghost will be seen on my hills, mournful for my young Hidallan. Will not ye, ye mists! as ye rise, hide him from my sight? My son! go to Lamor's hall: there the arms of our fathers hang. Bring the sword of Garmállon; he took it from a foe!"

He went and brought the sword with all its studded thongs. He gave it to his father. The grey-haired hero felt the point with his hand.

"My son! lead me to Garmállon's tomb: it rises beside that rustling tree. The long grass is withered; I hear the breezes whistling there. A little fountain murmurs near, and sends its water to Balva. There let me rest; it is noon: the sun is on our fields!"

He led him to Garmállon's tomb. Lamor pierced the side of his son. They sleep together: their ancient halls moulder away. Ghosts are seen there at noon: the valley is silent, and the people shun the place of Lamor.

"Mournful is thy tale," said Oscar, "son of the times of old! My soul sighs for Hidallan; he fell in the days of his youth. He flies on the blast of the desart, his wandering is in a foreign land. Sons of the echoing Morven! draw near to the foes of Fingal. Send the night away in songs; watch the strength of Caros. Oscar goes to the people of

of other times; to the ſhades of ſilent Ardven; where his fathers ſit dim in their clouds, and behold the future war. And art thou there, Hidallan, like a half-extinguiſhed meteor? Come to my ſight, in thy ſorrow, chief of the winding Balva!"

The heroes move with their ſongs. Oſcar ſlowly aſcends the hill. The meteors of night ſet on the heath before him. A diſtant torrent faintly roars. Unfrequent blaſts ruſh through aged oaks. The half-enlightened moon ſinks dim and red behind her hill. Feeble voices are heard on the heath. Oſcar drew his ſword!

"Come," ſaid the hero, "O ye ghoſts of my fathers! ye that fought againſt the kings of the world! Tell me the deeds of future times; and your converſe in your caves; when you talk together, and behold your ſons in the fields of the brave."

Trenmor came, from his hill, at the voice of his mighty ſon. A cloud, like the ſteed of the ſtranger, ſupported his airy limbs. His robe is of the miſt of Lano, that brings death to the people. His ſword is a green meteor half-extinguiſhed. His face is without form, and dark. He ſighed thrice over the hero: thrice the winds of night roared around! Many were his words to Oſcar; but they only came by halves to our ears: they were dark as the tales of other times, before the light of the ſong aroſe. He ſlowly vaniſhed, like a miſt that melts on the ſunny hill. It was then, O

daughter of Toſcar! my ſon began firſt to be ſad. He foreſaw the fall of his race. At times, he was thoughtful and dark; like the ſun when he carries a cloud on his face, but again he looks forth from his darkneſs on the green hills of Cona.

Oſcar paſſed the night among his fathers, grey morning met him on Carun's banks. A green vale ſurrounded a tomb which aroſe in the times of old. Little hills lift their head at a diſtance; and ſtretch their old trees to the wind. The warriors of Caros ſat there, for they had paſſed the ſtream by night. They appeared, like the trunks of aged pines, to the pale light of the morning. Oſcar ſtood at the tomb, and raiſed thrice his terrible voice. The rocking hills echoed around; the ſtarting roes bounded away: and the trembling ghoſts of the dead fled, ſhrieking on their clouds. So terrible was the voice of my ſon, when he called his friends!

A thouſand ſpears aroſe around; the people of Caros roſe. Why, daughter of Toſcar, why that tear? My ſon, though alone, is brave. Oſcar is like a beam of the ſky; he turns around, and the people fall. His hand is the arm of a ghoſt, when he ſtretches it from a cloud; the reſt of his thin form is unſeen; but the people die in the vale! My ſon beheld the approach of the foe; he ſtood in the ſilent darkneſs of his ſtrength. "Am I alone, ſaid Oſcar, in the midſt of a thouſand foes? Many a ſpear is there! many a darkly-rolling eye!

eye! Shall I fly to Ardven? But did my fathers ever fly? The mark of their arm is in a thousand battles. Oscar too shall be renowned! Come, ye dim ghosts of my fathers, and behold my deeds in war! I may fall; but I will be renowned like the race of the echoing Morven." He stood, growing in his place, like a flood in a narrow vale! The battle came, but they fell: bloody was the sword of Oscar!

The noise reached his people at Crona; they came like a hundred streams. The warriors of Caros fled; Oscar remained like a rock left by the ebbing sea. Now dark and deep, with all his steeds, Caros rolled his might along: the little streams are lost in his course; the earth is rocking round. Battle spreads from wing to wing: ten thousand swords gleam at once in the sky. But why should Ossian sing of battles? For never more shall my steel shine in war. I remember the days of my youth with grief; when I feel the weakness of my arm. Happy are they who fell in their youth, in the midst of their renown! They have not beheld the tombs of their friend; or failed to bend the bow of their strength. Happy art thou, O Oscar, in the midst of thy rushing blast. Thou often goest to the fields of thy fame, where Caros fled from thy lifted sword.

Darkness comes on my soul, O fair daughter of Toscar! I behold not the form of my son at Carun; nor the figure of Oscar on Crona. The rustling winds have carried him far away; and

and the heart of his father is ſad. But lead me, O Malvina! to the ſound of my woods; to the roar of my mountain ſtreams. Let the chaſe be heard on Cona; let me think on the days of other years. And bring me the harp, O maid! that I may touch it, when the light of my ſoul ſhall ariſe. Be thou near, to learn the ſong; future times ſhall hear of me! The ſons of the feeble hereafter will lift the voice on Cona; and, looking up to the rocks, ſay, "Here Oſſian dwelt." They ſhall admire the chiefs of old, the race that are no more! while we ride on our clouds, Malvina! on the wings of the roaring winds. Our voices ſhall be heard, at times, in the deſert; we ſhall ſing on the breeze of the rock.

CATHLIN of CLUTHA:

A

P O E M.

ARGUMENT.

An addrefs to Malvina, the daughter of Tofcar. The poet relates the arrival of Cathlin in Selma, to folicit aid againft Duth-carmor of Cluba, who had killed Cathmol, for the fake of his daughter Lanül. Fingal declining to make a choice among his heroes, who were all claiming the command of the expedition; they retired *each to his hill of ghofts*; to be determined by dreams. The fpirit of Trenmor appears to Offian and Ofcar: they fail, from the bay of Carmona, and, on the fourth day, appear off the valley of Rathcol, in Inis-huna, where Duth-carmor had fixed his refidence. Offian difpatches a bard to Duth-carmor to demand battle. Night comes on. The diftrefs of Cathlin of Clutha. Offian devolves the command on Ofcar, who, according to the cuftom of the kings of Morven, before battle, retired to a neighbouring hill. Upon the coming on of day, the battle joins. Ofcar and Duth-carmor meet. The latter falls. Ofcar carries the mail and helmet of Duth-carmor to Cathlin, who had retired from the field. Cathlin is difcovered to be the daughter of Cathmol, in difguife, who had been carried off, by force, by, and had made her efcape from, Duth-carmor.

CATHLIN OF CLUTHA

A

P O E M.

COME *, thou beam that art lonely, from watching in the night! The fqually winds are around thee, from all their echoing hills. Red, over my hundred ftreams, are the light-covered

* The traditions, which accompany this poem, inform us, that it went, of old, under the name of *Laoi-Oi-lutha*; i. e. the *hymn of the maid of Lutha*. They pretend alfo to fix the time of its compofition, to the third year after the death of Fingal; that is, during the expedition of Fergus the fon of Fingal, to the banks of *Uifca-duthon*. In fupport of this opinion, the Highland fenachies have prefixed to this poem, an addrefs of Offian, to Congal the young fon of Fergus, which I have rejected, as having no manner of connection with the reft of the piece. It has poetical merit; and, probably, it was the opening of one of Offian's other poems, though the bards injudicioufly transferred it to the piece now before us.

" Congal, fon of Fergus of Durath, thou light between thy locks, afcend to the rock of Selma, to the oak of the breaker of fhields. Look over the bofom of night, it is ftreaked with the red paths of the dead: look on the night of ghofts, and kindle, O Congal! thy foul. Be not, like the moon on a ftream, lonely in the midft of clouds:

covered paths of the dead. They rejoice, on the eddying winds, in the ſeaſon of night. Dwells there no joy in ſong, white hand of the harps of Lutha? Awake the voice of the ſtring; roll my ſoul to me. It is a ſtream that has failed. Malvina, pour the ſong.

I hear thee, from thy darkneſs, in Selma, thou that watcheſt, lonely, by night! Why didſt thou with-hold the ſong, from Oſſian's failing ſoul? As the falling brook to the ear of the hunter, deſcending from his ſtorm-covered hill; in a ſun-beam rolls the echoing ſtream; he hears, and ſhakes his dewy locks: ſuch is the voice of Lutha, to the friend of the ſpirits of heroes. My ſwelling boſom beats high. I look back on the days that are paſt. Come, thou beam that art lonely, from watching in the night!

In the echoing bay of Carmona * we ſaw, one day, the bounding ſhip. On high, hung a broken

clouds: darkneſs cloſes around it; and the beam departs. Depart not, ſon of Fergus! ere thou markeſt the field with thy ſword. Aſcend to the rock of Selma; to the oak of the breaker of ſhields."

* Car-mona, *bay of the dark-brown hills*, an arm of the ſea, in the neighbourhood of Selma. In this paragraph are mentioned the ſignals preſented to Fingal, by thoſe who came to demand his aid. The ſuppliants held, in one hand, a ſhield covered with blood, and, in the other, a broken ſpear; the firſt a ſymbol of the death of their friends, the laſt an emblem of their own helpleſs ſituation. If the king choſe to grant ſuccours, which generally was the caſe, he reached to them *the ſhell of feaſts*, as a token of his hoſpitality and friendly intentions towards them.

a broken ſhield; it was marked with wandering blood Forward came a youth, in arms, and ſtretched his pointleſs ſpear. Long, over his tearful eyes, hung looſe his diſordered locks. Fingal gave the ſhell of kings. The words of the ſtranger aroſe. " In his hall lies Cathmol of Clutha, by the winding of his own dark ſtreams. Duth-carmor ſaw white-boſomed Lanul *, and pierced her father's ſide. In the ruſhy deſart were my ſteps. He fled in the ſeaſon of night. Give thine aid to Cathlin to revenge his father. I ſought thee not as a beam, in a land of clouds. Thou, like the ſun, art known, king of echoing Selma !"

Selma's king looked around. In his preſence, we roſe in arms. But who ſhould

It may not be diſagreeable to the reader to lay here before him the ceremony of the Cran-tara, which was of a ſimilar nature, and, till very lately, uſed in the Highlands. When the news of an enemy came to the reſidence of a chief, he immediately killed a goat with his own ſword, dipped the end of an half-burnt piece of wood in the blood, and gave it to one of his ſervants, to be carried to the next hamlet. From hamlet to hamlet this *teſſera* was carried with the utmoſt expedition, and, in the ſpace of a few hours, the whole clan were in arms, and convened in an appointed place; the name of which was the only word that accompanied the delivery of the *Cran-tara*. This ſymbol was the manifeſto of the chief, by which he threatened fire and ſword to thoſe of his clan, that did not immediately appear at his ſtandard.

* Lanul, *full-eyed*, a ſurname which, according to tradition, was beſtowed on the daughter of Cathmol, on account of her beauty; this tradition, however, may have been founded on that partiality, which the bards have ſhewn to *Cathlin of Clutha*; for, according to them, no *falſehood could dwell in the ſoul of the lovely*.

lift the ſhield? for all had claimed the war. The night came down; we ſtrode, in ſilence; each to his hill of ghoſts: that ſpirits might deſcend, in our dreams, to mark us for the field. We ſtruck the ſhield of the dead: we raiſed the hum of ſongs. We thrice called the ghoſts of our fathers. We laid us down in dreams. Trenmor came, before mine eyes, the tall form of other years! His blue hoſts were behind him in half-diſtinguiſhed rows. Scarce ſeen is their ſtrife in miſt, or their ſtretching forward to deaths. I liſtened; but no ſound was there. The forms were empty wind!

I ſtarted from the dream of ghoſts. On a ſudden blaſt flew my whiſtling air. Low-ſounding, in the oak, is the departure of the dead. I took my ſhield from its bough. Onward came the rattling of ſteel. It was Oſcar * of Lego. He had ſeen his fathers. "As ruſhes forth the blaſt, on the boſom of whitening waves; ſo careleſs ſhall my courſe be, through ocean, to the dwelling of foes. I have ſeen the dead, my father! My beating ſoul is high! My fame is bright before me, like the

* Oſcar is here called *Oſcar of Lego*, from his mother being the daughter of Branno, a powerful chief, on the banks of that lake. It is remarkable that Oſſian addreſſes no poem to Malvina, in which her lover Oſcar was not one of the principal actors. His attention to her, after the death of his ſon, ſhews that delicacy of ſentiment is not confined, as ſome fondly imagine, to our own poliſhed times.

ſtreak of light on a cloud, when the broad ſun comes forth, red traveller of the ſky!"

"Grandſon of Branno," I ſaid, "not Oſcar alone ſhall meet the foe. I ruſh forward, through ocean, to the woody dwelling of heroes. Let us contend, my ſon, like eagles, from one rock; when they lift their broad wings, againſt the ſtream of winds." We raiſed our ſails in Carmona. From three ſhips, they marked my ſhield on the wave, as I looked on nightly Ton-thena *, red traveller between the clouds. Four days came the breeze abroad. Lumon came forward in miſt. In winds were its hundred groves. Sun-beams marked, at times, its brown ſide. White, leapt the foamy ſtreams, from all its echoing rocks.

A green field, in the boſom of hills, winds ſilent with its own blue ſtream. Here, midſt the waving of oaks, were the dwellings of kings of old. But ſilence, for many dark-brown years, had ſettled in graſſy Rathcol †; for the race

* Ton-thena, *fire of the wave*, was the remarkable ſtar mentioned in the ſeventh book of Temora, which directed the courſe of Larthon to Ireland. It ſeems to have been well known to thoſe, who ſailed on that ſea, which divides Ireland from South-Britain. As the courſe of Oſſian was along the coaſt of Inis-huna, he mentions, with propriety, that ſtar which directed the voyage of the colony from that country to Ireland.

† Rath-col, *woody field*, does not appear to have been the reſidence of Duth-carmor: he ſeems rather to have been forced thither by a ſtorm; at leaſt I ſhould think that to be the meaning of the poet, from his expreſſion, that *Ton-thena had hid her head*, and that *he bound his white-boſomed*

race of heroes had failed, along the pleaſant vale. Duth-carmor was here, with his people, dark rider of the wave. Ton-thena had hid her head in the ſky. He bound his white-boſomed ſails. His courſe is on the hills of Rath-col, to the ſeats of roes. We came. I ſent the bard, with ſongs, to call the foe to fight. Duth-carmor heard him, with joy. The king's ſoul was like a beam of fire; a beam of fire, marked with ſmoak, ruſhing, varied, through the boſom of night. The deeds of Duth-carmor were dark, though his arm was ſtrong.

Night came, with the gathering of clouds. By the beam of the oak we ſat down. At a diſtance ſtood Cathlin of Clutha. I ſaw the changeful * ſoul of the ſtranger. As ſhadows fly over the field of graſs, ſo various is Cathlin's cheek. It was fair, within locks, that

boſomed ſails; which is as much as to ſay, that the weather was ſtormy, and that Duth-carmor put in to the bay of Rath-col for ſhelter.

* From this circumſtance, ſucceeding bards feigned that Cathlin, who is here in the diſguiſe of a young warrior, had fallen in love with Duth-carmor at a feaſt, to which he had been invited by her father. Her love was converted into deteſtation for him, after he had murdered her father. But *as thoſe rain-bows of heaven are changeful*, ſay my authors, ſpeaking of women, ſhe felt the return of her former paſſion, upon the approach of Duth-carmor's danger. I myſelf, who think more favourably of the ſex, muſt attribute the agitation of Cathlin's mind to her extreme ſenſibility to the injuries done her by Duth-carmor: and this opinion is favoured by the ſequel of the ſtory.

rofe on Rath-col's wind. I did not rufh, amidft his foul, with my words. I bade the fong to rife.

"Ofcar of Lego," I faid, "be thine the fecret hill *, to-night. Strike the fhield like Morven's kings. With day, thou fhalt lead in war. From my rock, I fhall fee thee, Ofcar, a dreadful form afcending in fight, like the appearance of ghofts, amidft the ftorms they raife. Why fhould mine eyes return to the dim times of old, ere yet the fong had burfted forth, like the fudden rifing of winds? But the years, that are paft, are marked with mighty deeds. As the nightly rider of waves looks up to Ton-thena of beams; fo let us turn our eyes to Trenmor, the father of kings."

"Wide, in Caracha's echoing field, Carmal had poured his tribes. They were a dark ridge of waves. The grey-haired bards were like moving foam on their face. They kindled the ftrife around, with their red-rolling eyes. Nor alone were the dwellers of rocks;

* This paffage alludes to the well-known cuftom among the ancient kings of Scotland, to retire from their army on the night preceding a battle. The ftory which Offian introduces in the next paragraph, concerns the fall of the Druids. It is faid in many old poems, that the Druids, in the extremity of their affairs, had folicited and obtained aid from Scandinavia. Among the auxiliaries there came many pretended magicians, which circumftance Offian alludes to, in his defcription of the *fon of Loda*. Magic and incantation could not, however, prevail; for Trenmor, affifted by the valour of his fon Trathal, entirely broke the power of the Druids.

a ſon of Loda was there; a voice, in his own dark land, to call the ghoſts from high. On his hill, he had dwelt, in Lochlin, in the midſt of a leafleſs grove. Five ſtones lifted, near, their heads. Loud roared his ruſhing ſtream. He often raiſed his voice to the winds, when meteors marked their nightly wings; when the dark-robed moon was rolled behind her hill. Nor unheard of ghoſts was he! They came with the ſound of eagle wings. They turned battle, in fields, before the kings of men.

"But, Trenmor, they turned not from battle. He drew forward that troubled war; in its dark ſkirt was Trathal, like a riſing light. It was dark; and Loda's ſon poured forth his ſigns, on night. The feeble were not before thee, ſon of other lands *! Then roſe the ſtrife of kings, about the hill of night; but it was ſoft as two ſummer gales, ſhaking their light wings, on a lake. Trenmor yielded to his ſon; for the fame of the king had been heard. Trathal came forth before his father, and the foes failed, in echoing Caracha. The years that are paſt, my ſon, are marked with mighty deeds †."

* Trenmor and Trathal. Oſſian introduced this epiſode, as an example to his ſon, from ancient times.

† Thoſe who deliver down this poem in tradition, lament that there is a great part of it loſt. In particular they regret the loſs of an epiſode, which was here introduced, with the ſequel of the ſtory of Carmal and his Druids. Their attachment to it was founded on the deſcriptions of magical inchantments which it contained.

In clouds rose the eaſtern light. The foe came forth in arms. The ſtrife is mixed on Rath-col, like the roar of ſtreams. Behold the contending of kings! They meet beſide the oak. In gleams of ſteel the dark forms are loſt; ſuch is the meeting of meteors, in a vale by night: red light is ſcattered round, and men foreſee the ſtorm! Duth-carmor is low in blood! The ſon of Oſſian overcame! Not harmleſs in battle was he, Malvina hand of harps!

Nor, in the field, were the ſteps of Cathlin. The ſtranger ſtood by a ſecret ſtream, where the foam of Rath-col ſkirted the moſſy ſtones. Above, bends the branchy birch, and ſtrews its leaves, on wind. The inverted ſpear of Cathlin touched, at times, the ſtream. Oſcar brought Duth-carmor's mail: his helmet with its eagle wing. He placed them before the ſtranger, and his words were heard. "The foes of thy father have failed. They are laid in the field of ghoſts. Renown returns to Morven, like a riſing wind. Why art thou dark, chief of Clutha? Is there cauſe for grief?"

"Son of Oſſian of harps, my ſoul is darkly ſad. I behold the arms of Cathmol, which he raiſed in war. Take the mail of Cathlin, place it high in Selma's hall; that thou mayſt remember the hapleſs in thy diſtant land." From white breaſts deſcended the mail. It was the race of kings; the ſoft-handed daughter of Cathmol, at the ſtreams of Clutha! Duth-carmor ſaw her bright in the hall; he had come,

by

by night, to Clutha. Cathmol met him, in battle, but the hero fell. Three days dwelt the foe, with the maid. On the fourth ſhe fled in arms. She remembered the race of kings, and felt her burſting ſoul!

Why, maid of Toſcar of Lutha, ſhould I tell how Cathlin failed? Her tomb is at ruſhy Lumon, in a diſtant land. Near it were the ſteps of Sul-malla, in the days of grief. She raiſed the ſong, for the daughter of ſtrangers, and touched the mournful harp.

Come, from the watching of night, Malvina, lonely beam!

SUL-MALLA

OF

LUMON:

A

POEM.

ARGUMENT.

This poem, which, properly ſpeaking, is a continuation of the laſt, opens with an addreſs to Sul-malla, the daughter of the king of Inis-huna, whom Oſſian met, at the chaſe, as he returned from the battle of Rath-col. Sul-malla invites Oſſian and Oſcar to a feaſt, at the reſidence of her father, who was then abſent in the wars. Upon hearing their name and family, ſhe relates an expedition of Fingal into Inis-huna. She caſually mentioning Cathmor, chief of Atha (who then aſſiſted her father againſt his enemies), Oſſian introduces the epiſode of Culgorm and Suran-dronlo, two Scandinavian kings, in whoſe wars Oſſian himſelf and Cathmor were engaged on oppoſite ſides. The ſtory is imperfect, a part of the original being loſt. Oſſian, warned in a dream, by the ghoſt of Trenmor, ſets ſail from Inis-huna.

SUL-MALLA OF LUMON: A POEM.

WHO * moves fo ftately, on Lumon, at the roar of the foamy waters? Her hair falls upon her heaving breaft. White is her arm behind, as flow fhe bends the bow. Why doft

* The expedition of Offian to Inis-huna happened a fhort time before Fingal paffed over into Ireland, to dethrone Cairbar the fon of Borbar-duthal. Cathmor, the the brother of Cairbar, was aiding Conmor, king of Inis-huna, in his wars, at the time that Offian defeated Duth-carmor, in the valley of Rath-col. The poem is more interefting, that it contains fo many particulars concerning thofe perfonages, who make fo great a figure in Temora.

The exact correfpondence in the manners and cuftoms of Inis-huna, as here defcribed, to thofe of Caledonia, leaves no room to doubt, that the inhabitants of both were originally the fame people. Some may allege, that Offian might transfer, in his poetical defcriptions, the manners of his own nation to foreigners. This objection is eafily anfwered. Why has he not done this with regard to the inhabitants of Scandinavia? We find the lat-

doſt thou wander in deſerts, like a light through a cloudy field ? The young roes are panting, by their ſecret rocks. Return, thou daughter of kings ! the cloudy night is near ! It was the young branch of green Inis-huna, Sul-malla of blue eyes. She ſent the bard from her rock, to bid us to her feaſt. Amidſt the ſong we ſat down, in Cluba's echoing hall. White moved the hands of Sul-malla, on the trembling ſtrings. Half-heard amidſt the ſound, was the name of Atha's king : he that was abſent in battle for her own green land. Nor abſent from her ſoul was he ; he came midſt her thoughts by night. Ton-thena looked in, from the ſky, and ſaw her toſſing arms.

The ſound of ſhells had ceaſed. Amidſt long locks, Sul-malla roſe. She ſpoke with bended eyes, and aſked of our courſe through ſeas ; " for of the kings of men are ye, tall riders of the wave *." " Not unknown," I ſaid,

ter very different in their cuſtoms and ſuperſtitions from the nations of Britain and Ireland. The Scandinavian manners are remarkably barbarous and fierce, and ſeem to mark out a nation much leſs advanced in a ſtate of civilization, than the inhabitants of Britain were in the times of Oſſian.

* Sul-malla here diſcovers the quality of Oſſian and Oſcar from their ſtature and ſtately gait. Among nations not far advanced in civilization, a ſuperior beauty and ſtatelineſs of perſon were inſeparable from nobility of blood. It was from theſe qualities, that thoſe of family were known by ſtrangers, not from tawdry trappings of ſtate injudiciouſly thrown round them. The cauſe of this diſtinguiſhing

ſaid, "at his ſtreams is he, the father of our race. Fingal has been heard of at Cluba, blue-eyed daughter of kings. Nor only, at Cona's ſtream, is Oſſian and Oſcar known. Foes trembled at our voice, and ſhrunk in other lands."

"Not unmarked," ſaid the maid, "by Sul-malla, is the ſhield of Morven's king. It hangs high in my father's hall, in memory of the paſt; when Fingal came to Cluba, in the days of other years. Loud roared the boar of Culdarnu, in the midſt of his rocks and woods. Inis-huna ſent her youths, but they failed; and virgins wept over tombs. Careleſs went Fingal to Culdarnu. On his ſpear rolled the ſtrength of the woods. He was bright, they ſaid, in his locks, the firſt of mortal men. Nor at the feaſt were heard his words. His deeds paſſed from his ſoul of fire, like the rolling of vapours from the face of the wandering ſun. Not careleſs looked the blue eyes of Cluba on

diſtinguiſhing property muſt, in ſome meaſure, be aſcribed to their unmixed blood. They had no inducement to intermarry with the vulgar: and no low notions of intereſt made them deviate from their choice, in their own ſphere. In ſtates where luxury has been long eſtabliſhed, beauty of perſon is, by no means, the characteriſtic of antiquity of family. This muſt be attributed to thoſe enervating vices which are inſeparable from luxury and wealth. A great family, (to alter a little the words of the hiſtorian,) it is true, like a river, becomes conſiderable from the length of its courſe, but, as it rolls on, hereditary diſtempers, as well as property, flow ſucceſſively into it.

his ſtately ſteps. In white boſoms roſe the king of Selma, in the midſt of their thoughts by night. But the winds bore the ſtranger to the echoing vales of his roes. Nor loſt to other lands was he, like a meteor that ſinks in a cloud. He came forth, at times, in his brightneſs, to the diſtant dwelling of foes. His fame came, like the ſound of winds, to Cluba's woody vale *."

Darkneſs dwells in Cluba of harps: the race of kings is diſtant far; in battle is my

* Too partial to our own times, we are ready to mark out remote antiquity, as the region of ignorance and barbariſm. This, perhaps, is extending our prejudices too far. It has been long remarked, that knowledge, in a great meaſure, is founded on a free intercourſe between mankind; and that the mind is enlarged in proportion to the obſervations it has made upon the manners of different men and nations If we look, with attention, into the hiſtory of Fingal, as delivered by Oſſian, we ſhall find that he was not altogether a poor ignorant hunter, confined to the narrow corner of an iſland. His expeditions to all parts of Scandinavia, to the north of Germany, and the different ſtates of Great Britain and Ireland, were very numerous, and performed under ſuch a character, and at ſuch times, as gave him an opportunity to mark the undiſguiſed manners of mankind. War and an active life, as they call forth, by turns, all the powers of the ſoul, preſent to us the different characters of men: in times of peace and quiet, for want of objects to exert them, the powers of the mind lie concealed, in a great meaſure, and we ſee only artificial paſſions and manners. It is from this conſideration I conclude, that a traveller of penetration could gather more genuine knowledge from a tour of ancient Gaul, than from the minuteſt obſervation of all the artificial manners and elegant refinements of modern France.

father Conmor; and Lormar * my brother, king of ſtreams. Nor darkening alone are they; a beam from other lands is nigh; the friend of ſtrangers † in Atha the troubler of the field. High from their miſty hills, look forth the blue eyes of Erin; for he is far away, young dweller of their ſouls! Nor, harmleſs, white hands of Erin! is Cathmor in the ſkirts of war; he rolls ten thouſand before him, in his diſtant field."

"Not unſeen by Oſſian," I ſaid, "ruſhed Cathmor from his ſtreams, when he poured his ſtrength on I-thorno ‡, iſle of many waves! In ſtrife met two kings in I-thorno, Culgorm and Suran-dronlo: each from his echoing iſle, ſtern hunters of the boar!"

* Lormar was the ſon of Conmor, and the brother of Sul-malla. After the death of Conmor, Lormar ſucceeded him in the throne.

† Cathmor, the ſon of Borbar-duthal. It would appear from the partiality with which Sul-malla ſpeaks of that hero, that ſhe had ſeen him, previous to his joining her father's army; though tradition poſitively aſſerts, that it was after his return that ſhe fell in love with him.

‡ I-thorno, ſays tradition, was an iſland of Scandinavia. In it, at a hunting party, met Culgorm and Suran-dronlo, the kings of two neighbouring iſles. They differed about the honour of killing a boar; and a war was kindled between them. From this epiſode we may learn, that the manners of the Scandinavians were much more ſavage and cruel than thoſe of Britain. It is remarkable, that the names introduced in this ſtory are not of Galic original, which circumſtance affords room to ſuppoſe, that it had its foundation in true hiſtory.

" They met a boar, at a foamy ſtream: each pierced him with his ſpear. They ſtrove for the fame of the deed; and gloomy battle roſe. From iſle to iſle they ſent a ſpear, broken and ſtained with blood, to call the friends of their fathers, in their ſounding arms. Cathmor came, from Erin, to Culgorm, red-eyed king: I aided Suran-dronlo, in his land of boars."

" We ruſhed on either ſide of a ſtream, which roared through a blaſted heath. High broken rocks were round, with all their bending trees. Near were two circles of Loda, with the ſtone of power; where ſpirits deſcended, by night, in dark-red ſtreams of fire. There, mixed with the murmur of waters, roſe the voice of aged men; they called the forms of night, to aid them in their war."

" Heedleſs * I ſtood, with my people, where fell the foamy ſtream from rocks. The moon moved red from the mountain. My ſong, at times, aroſe. Dark, on the other ſide, young Cathmor heard my voice; for he lay, beneath the oak, in all his gleaming arms. Morning came; we ruſhed to fight: from wing to wing

* From the circumſtance of Oſſian not being preſent at the rites deſcribed in the preceding paragraph, we may ſuppoſe that he held them in contempt. This difference of ſentiment with regard to religion, is a ſort of argument, that the Caledonians were not originally a colony of Scandinavians, as ſome have imagined. Concerning ſo remote a period, mere conjecture muſt ſupply the place of argument and poſitive proofs.

is the rolling of ſtrife. They fell like the thiſtle's head, beneath autumnal winds."

"In armour came a ſtately form: I mixed my ſtrokes with the chief. By turns our ſhields are pierced: loud rung our ſteelly mails. His helmet fell to the ground. In brightneſs ſhone the foe. His eyes, two pleaſant flames, rolled between his wandering locks. I knew Cathmor of Atha, and threw my ſpear on earth. Dark, we turned, and ſilent paſſed to mix with other foes."

"Not ſo paſſed the ſtriving kings *. They mixed in echoing fray: like the meeting of ghoſts, in the dark wing of winds. Through either breaſt ruſhed the ſpears; nor yet lay the foes on earth! A rock received their fall; half-reclined they lay in death. Each held the lock of his foe; each grimly ſeemed to roll his eyes. The ſtream of the rock leapt on their ſhields, and mixed below with blood.

"The battle ceaſed in I-thorno. The ſtrangers met in peace: Cathmor from Atha of ſtreams, and Oſſian, king of harps. We placed the dead in earth. Our ſteps were by Runar's bay. With the bounding boat, afar, advanced a ridgy wave. Dark was the rider of ſeas, but a beam of light was there, like the ray of the ſun, in Stromlo's rolling ſmoak. It

* Culgorm and Suran-dronlo. The combat of the kings and their attitude in death are highly picturéſque, and expreſſive of that ferocity of manners which diſtinguiſhed the northern nations.

was the daughter* of Suran-dronlo, wild in brightened looks. Her eyes were wandering flames, amidst disordered locks. Forward is her white arm, with the spear; her high

* Tradition has handed down the name of this princess. The bards call her Runo-forlo, which has no other sort of title for being genuine, but its not being of Galic original; a distinction which the bards had not the art to preserve, when they feigned names for foreigners. The highland senachies, who very often endeavoured to supply the deficiency they thought they found in the tales of Ossian, have given us the continuation of the story of the daughter of Suran-dronlo. The catastrophe is so unnatural, and the circumstances of it so ridiculously pompous, that, for the sake of the inventors, I shall conceal them.

The wildly beautiful appearance of Runo-forlo made a deep impression on a chief, some ages ago, who was himself no contemptible poet. The story is romantic, but not incredible, if we make allowances for the lively imagination of a man of genius. Our chief sailing, in a storm, along one of the islands of Orkney, saw a woman, in a boat, near the shore, whom he thought, as he expresses it himself, *as beautiful as a sudden ray of the sun, on the dark heaving deep.* The verses of Ossian, on the attitude of Runo-forlo, which was so similar to that of the woman in the boat, wrought so much on his fancy, that he fell desperately in love. The winds, however, drove him from the coast, and, after a few days, he arrived at his residence in Scotland. There his passion increased to such a degree, that two of his friends, fearing the consequence, sailed to the Orkneys, to carry to him the object of his desire. Upon inquiry they soon found the nymph, and carried her to the enamoured chief; but mark his surprize, when, instead of *a ray of the sun*, he saw a skinny fisherwoman, more than middle aged, appearing before him. Tradition here ends the story: but it may be easily supposed that the passion of the chief soon subsided.

heaving breaſt is ſeen, white as foamy waves that riſe, by turns, amidſt rocks. They are beautiful, but terrible, and mariners call the winds!"

"Come, ye dwellers of Loda!" ſhe ſaid, "come, Carchar, pale in the midſt of clouds! Sluthmor that ſtrideſt in airy halls! Corchtur, terrible in winds! Receive, from his daughter's ſpear, the foes of Suran-dronlo. No ſhadow, at his roaring ſtreams; no mildly-looking form was he! When he took up his ſpear, the hawks ſhook their ſounding wings: for blood was poured around the ſteps of dark-eyed Suran-dronlo. He lighted me, no harmleſs beam, to glitter on his ſtreams. Like meteors, I was bright, but I blaſted the foes of Suran-dronlo."

* * * * * * *

Nor unconcerned heard Sul-malla, the praiſe of Cathmor of ſhields. He was within her ſoul, like a fire in ſecret heath, which awakes at the voice of the blaſt, and ſends its beam abroad. Amidſt the ſong removed the daughter of kings, like the voice of a ſummer-breeze; when it lifts the heads of flowers, and curls the lakes and ſtreams. The ruſtling ſound gently ſpreads o'er the vale, ſoftly-pleaſing as it ſaddens the ſoul.

By night came a dream to Oſſian; formleſs ſtood the ſhadow of Trenmor. He ſeemed to ſtrike the dim ſhield, on Selma's ſtreamy rock. I roſe, in my rattling ſteel; I knew that war

was near, before the winds our ſails were ſpread ; when Lumon ſhewed its ſtreams to the morn.

Come from the watching of night, Malvina, lonely beam !

THE
WAR of INIS-THONA:
A
P O E M.

ARGUMENT.

Reflections on the poet's youth. An apoſtrophe to Selma. Oſcar obtains leave to go to Inis-thona, an iſland of Scandinavia. The mournful ſtory of Argon and Ruro, the two ſons of the king of Inis-thona. Oſcar revenges their death, and returns in triumph to Selma. A ſoliloquy by the poet himſelf.

THE

WAR of INIS-THONA

A

P O E M.

OUR youth is like the dream of the hunter on the hill of heath. He ſleeps in the mild beams of the ſun; he awakes amidſt a ſtorm; the red lightning flies around: trees ſhake their heads to the wind! He looks back with joy, on the day of the ſun; and the pleaſant dreams of his reſt! When ſhall Oſſian's youth return? When his ear delight in the ſound of arms? When ſhall I, like Oſcar, travel in the light of my ſteel? Come, with your ſtreams, ye hills of Cona! liſten to the voice of Oſſian. The ſong riſes, like the ſun, in my ſoul. I feel the joys of other times!

I behold thy towers, O Selma! the oaks of thy ſhaded wall: thy ſtreams ſound in my ear; thy heroes gather around. Fingal ſits in the midſt. He leans on the ſhield of Trenmor: his ſpear ſtands againſt the wall; he liſtens to the ſong of his bards. The deeds of his arm

arm are heard; the actions of the king in his youth! Oſcar had returned from the chaſe, and heard the hero's praiſe. He took the ſhield of Branno * from the wall; his eyes were filled with tears. Red was the cheek of youth. His voice was trembling low. My ſpear ſhook its bright head in his hand: he ſpoke to Morven's king.

"Fingal! thou king of heroes! Oſſian, next to him in war! ye have fought in your youth; your names are renowned in ſong. Oſcar is like the miſt of Cona; I appear and I vaniſh away. The bard will not know my name. The hunter will not ſearch in the heath for my tomb. Let me fight, O heroes, in the battles of Inis-thona. Diſtant is the land of my war! ye ſhall not hear of Oſcar's fall! ſome bard may find me there; ſome bard may give my name to ſong. The daughter of the ſtranger ſhall ſee my tomb, and weep over the youth, that came from afar. The bard ſhall ſay, at the feaſt, "hear the ſong of Oſcar from the diſtant land!"

"Oſcar," replied the king of Morven; "thou ſhalt fight, ſon of my fame! Prepare my dark-boſomed ſhip to carry my hero to Inis-thona. Son of my ſon, regard our fame; thou art of the race of renown! Let not the

* This is Branno, the father of Everallin, and grandfather to Oſcar; he was of Iriſh extraction, and lord of the country round the lake of Lego. His great actions are handed down by tradition, and his hoſpitality has paſſed into a proverb.

children of strangers say, feeble are the sons of Morven! Be thou, in battle, a roaring storm: mild as the evening sun in peace! Tell, Oscar, to Inis-thona's king, that Fingal remembers his youth; when we strove in the combat together, in the days of Agandecca."

They lifted up the sounding sail; the wind whistled through the thongs* of their masts. Waves lash the oozy rocks: the strength of ocean roars. My son beheld, from the wave, the land of groves. He rushed into Runa's sounding bay, and sent his sword to Annir of spears. The grey-haired hero rose, when he saw the sword of Fingal. His eyes were full of tears; he remembered his battles in youth. Twice had they lifted the spear, before the lovely Agandecca: heroes stood far distant, as if two spirits were striving in winds.

"But now," began the king, "I am old; the sword lies useless in my hall. Thou, who art of Morven's race! Annir has seen the battle of spears; but now he is pale and withered, like the oak of Lano. I have no son to meet thee with joy, to bring thee to the halls of his fathers. Argon is pale in the tomb, and Ruro is no more. My daughter is in the hall of strangers: she longs to behold my tomb. Her spouse shakes ten thousand spears, he comes † a cloud of death from Lano.

* Leather thongs were used among the Celtic nations, instead of ropes.

† Cormalo had resolved on a war against his father-in-law, Annir king of Inis-thona, in order to deprive him of

 his

Lano. Come, to ſhare the feaſt of Annir, ſon of echoing Morven !"

Three days they feaſted together; on the fourth, Annir heard the name of Oſcar. They rejoiced in the ſhell *. They purſued the boars of Runa. Beſide the fount of moſſy ſtones, the weary heroes reſt. The tear ſteals in ſecret from Annir: he broke the riſing ſigh. " Here darkly reſt," the hero ſaid, " the children of my youth. This ſtone is the tomb of Ruro; that tree ſounds over the grave of Argon. Do ye hear my voice, O my ſons, within your narrow houſe? Or do ye ſpeak in theſe ruſtling leaves, when the winds of the deſert riſe?"

" King of Inis-thona," ſaid Oſcar, " how fell the children of youth? The wild boar ruſhes over their tombs, but he does not diſturb their repoſe. They purſue deer † formed of clouds, and bend their airy bow. They

his kingdom: the injuſtice of his deſigns was ſo much reſented by Fingal, that he ſent his grandſon, Oſcar, to the aſſiſtance of Annir. Both armies came ſoon to a battle, in which the conduct and valour of Oſcar obtained a complete victory. An end was put to the war by the death of Cormalo, who fell in a ſingle combat, by Oſcar's hand. Thus is the ſtory delivered down by tradition; though the poet, to raiſe the character of his ſon, makes Oſcar himſelf propoſe the expedition.

* *To rejoice in the ſhell*, is a phraſe for feaſting ſumptuouſly and drinking freely.

† The notion of Oſſian concerning the ſtate of the deceaſed, was the ſame with that of the ancient Greeks and Romans. They imagined that the ſouls purſued, in their ſeparate ſtate, the employments and pleaſures of their former life.

ſtill

ſtill love the ſport of their youth; and mount the wind with joy.

"Cormalo," replied the king, "is a chief of ten thouſand ſpears. He dwells at the waters of Lano *, which ſends forth the vapour of death. He came to Runa's echoing halls, and ſought the honour of the ſpear †. The youth was lovely as the firſt beam of the ſun; few were they who could meet him in fight! My heroes yielded to Cormalo: my daughter was ſeized in his love. Argon and Ruro returned from the chaſe; the tears of their pride deſcend: they roll their ſilent eyes on Runa's heroes, who had yielded to a ſtranger. Three days they feaſted with Cormalo: on the fourth young Argon fought. But who could fight with Argon! Cormalo is overcome. His heart ſwelled with the grief of pride; he reſolved, in ſecret, to behold the death of my ſon. They went to the hills of Runa: they purſued the dark-brown hinds. The arrow of Cormalo flew in ſecret; my children fell in blood. He came to the maid of his love; to Inis-thona's long-haired maid. They fled over the deſert. Annir remained alone. Night came on, and day appeared: nor Argon's voice, nor Ruro's

* Lano was a lake of Scandinavia, remarkable, in the days of Oſſian, for emitting a peſtilential vapour in autumn. *And thou, O valiant Duchomar! like the miſt of marſhy Lano; when it ſails over the plains of autumn, and brings death to the hoſt.* Fingal, B. I.

† By *the honour of the ſpear*, is meant the tournament practiſed among the ancient northern nations.

came. At length their much-loved dog was ſeen; the fleet and bounding Runa. He came into the hall and howled; and ſeemed to look towards the place of their fall. We followed him: we found them here: we laid them by this moſſy ſtream. This is the haunt of Annir, when the chaſe of the hinds is paſt. I bend like the trunk of an aged oak; my tears for ever flow!"

"O Ronnan!" ſaid the riſing Oſcar, "Ogar king of ſpears! call my heroes to my ſide, the ſons of ſtreamy Morven. To-day we go to Lano's water, that ſends forth the vapour of death. Cormalo will not long rejoice: death is often at the point of our ſwords!"

They came over the deſert like ſtormy clouds, when the winds roll them along the heath: their edges are tinged with lightning; the echoing groves foreſee the ſtorm! The horn of Oſcar's battle is heard; Lano ſhook over all its waves. The children of the lake convened around the ſounding ſhield of Cormalo. Oſcar fought, as he was wont in war. Cormalo fell beneath his ſword: the ſons of diſmal Lano fled to their ſecret vales! Oſcar brought the daughter of Inis-thona to Annir's echoing halls. The face of age is bright with joy; he bleſt the king of ſwords!

How great was the joy of Oſſian, when he beheld the diſtant ſail of his ſon! it was like a cloud of light that riſes in the eaſt, when the traveller is ſad in a land unknown; and diſmal night, with her ghoſts, is ſitting around in

ſhades! We brought him with ſongs to Selma's halls. Fingal ſpread the feaſt of ſhells. A thouſand bards raiſed the name of Oſcar: Morven anſwered to the ſound. The daughter of Toſcar was there; her voice was like the harp; when the diſtant ſound comes, in the evening, on the ſoft-ruſtling breeze of the vale!

O lay me, ye that ſee the light, near ſome rock of my hills! let the thick hazels be around, let the ruſtling oak be near. Green be the place of my reſt; let the ſound of the diſtant torrent be heard. Daughter of Toſcar, take the harp, and raiſe the lovely ſong of Selma; that ſleep may overtake my ſoul in the midſt of joy; that the dreams of my youth may return, and the days of the mighty Fingal. Selma! I behold thy towers, thy trees, thy ſhaded wall! I ſee the heroes of Morven; I hear the ſong of bards; Oſcar lifts the ſword of Cormalo; a thouſand youths admire its ſtudded thongs. They look with wonder on my ſon: they admire the ſtrength of his arm. They mark the joy of his father's eyes; they long for an equal fame. And ye ſhall have your fame, O ſons of ſtreamy Morven! My ſoul is often brightened with ſong; I remember the friends of my youth. But ſleep deſcends in the ſound of the harp! pleaſant dreams begin to riſe! Ye ſons of the chaſe, ſtand far diſtant, nor diſturb my reſt. The bard of other times holds diſcourſe with his fathers! the chiefs of the days of old! Sons of the chaſe, ſtand far diſtant! diſturb not the dreams of Oſſian!

THE

SONGS

OF

SELMA.

ARGUMENT.

Addreſs to the evening ſtar. Apoſtrophe to Fingal and his times. Minona ſings before the king the ſong of the unfortunate Colma; and the bards exhibit other ſpecimens of their poetical talents; according to an annual cuſtom eſtabliſhed by the monarchs of the ancient Caledonians.

THE

SONGS of SELMA.

STAR of descending night! fair is thy light in the west! thou liftest thy unshorn head from thy cloud: thy steps are stately on thy hill. What dost thou behold in the plain? The stormy winds are laid. The murmur of the torrent comes from afar. Roaring waves climb the distant rock. The flies of evening are on their feeble wings; the hum of their course is on the field. What dost thou behold, fair light? But thou dost smile and depart. The waves come with joy around thee: they bathe thy lovely hair. Farewell, thou silent beam! Let the light of Ossian's soul arise!

And it does arise in its strength! I behold my departed friends. Their gathering is on Lora, as in the days of other years. Fingal comes likes a watry column of mist! his heroes are around: and see the bards of song, grey-haired Ullin! stately Ryno! Alpin*,

* Alpin is from the same root with Albion, or rather Albin, the ancient name of Britain; Alp, *high Island*, or *country*. The present name of our island has its origin in the Celtic tongue; so that those who derived it from any other betrayed their ignorance of the ancient language of our country. *Brait* or *Braid*, extensive; and *in*, land.

with

with the tuneful voice! the ſoft complaint of Minona! How are ye changed, my friends, ſince the days of Selma's feaſt? when we contended, like gales of ſpring, as they fly along the hill, and bend by turns the feebly-whiſtling graſs.

Minona * came forth in her beauty; with down-caſt look and tearful eye. Her hair flew ſlowly on the blaſt, that ruſhed unfrequent from the hill. The ſouls of the heroes were ſad when ſhe raiſed the tuneful voice. Often had they ſeen the grave of Salgar †, the dark dwelling of white-boſomed Colma ‡. Colma left alone on the hill, with all her voice of ſong! Salgar promiſed to come: but the night deſcended around. Hear the voice of Colma, when ſhe ſat alone on the hill!

COLMA.

It is night; I am alone, forlorn on the hill of ſtorms. The wind is heard on the mountain. The torrent pours down the rock. No hut receives me from the rain; forlorn on the hill of winds!

Riſe, moon! from behind thy clouds. Stars of the night, ariſe! Lead me, ſome light, to the place, where my love reſts from the chaſe alone!

* Oſſian introduces Minona, not in the ideal ſcene in his own mind, which he had deſcribed; but at the annual feaſt of Selma, where the bards repeated their works before Fingal.

† Sealg-'er, *a hunter.*

‡ Cul-math, *a woman with fine hair.*

alone! his bow near him, unſtrung: his dogs panting around him. But here I muſt ſit alone, by the rock of the moſſy ſtream. The ſtream and the wind roar aloud. I hear not the voice of my love! Why delays my Salgar, why the chief of the hill, his promiſe? Here is the rock, and here the tree! here is the roaring ſtream! Thou didſt promiſe with night to be here. Ah! whither is my Salgar gone? With thee I would fly, from my father; with thee, from my brother of pride. Our race have long been foes; we are not foes, O Salgar!

Ceaſe a little while, O wind! ſtream, be thou ſilent a while! let my voice be heard around. Let my wanderer hear me! Salgar! it is Colma who calls. Here is the tree, and the rock. Salgar, my love! I am here. Why delayeſt thou thy coming? Lo! the calm moon comes forth. The flood is bright in the vale. The rocks are grey on the ſteep. I ſee him not on the brow. His dogs come not before him, with tidings of his near approach. Here I muſt ſit alone!

Who lie on the heath beſide me? Are they my love and my brother? Speak to me, O my friends! To Colma they give no reply. Speak to me: I am alone! My ſoul is tormented with fears! Ah! they are dead! Their ſwords are red from the fight. O my brother! my brother! why haſt thou ſlain my Salgar? why, O Salgar! haſt thou ſlain my brother? Dear were ye both to me! what ſhall I ſay in your praiſe? Thou wert fair on the hill among thouſands!

thoufands! he was terrible in fight. Speak to me; hear my voice; hear me, fons of my love! They are filent; filent for ever! Cold, cold are their breafts of clay! Oh! from the rock on the hill; from the top of the windy fteep, fpeak, ye ghofts of the dead! fpeak, I will not be afraid! Whither are ye gone to reft? In what cave of the hill fhall I find the departed? No feeble voice is on the gale: no anfwer half-drowned in the ftorm!

I fit in my grief; I wait for morning in my tears! Rear the tomb, ye friends of the dead. Clofe it not till Colma come. My life flies away like a dream: why fhould I ftay behind? Here fhall I reft with my friends, by the ftream of the founding rock. When night comes on the hill; when the loud winds arife; my ghoft fhall ftand in the blaft, and mourn the death of my friends. The hunter fhall hear from his booth. He fhall fear but love my voice! For fweet fhall my voice be for my friends: pleafant were her friends to Colma!

Such was thy fong, Minona, foftly-blufhing daughter of Torman. Our tears defcended for Colma, and our fouls were fad! Ullin came with his harp! he gave the fong of Alpin. The voice of Alpin was pleafant: the foul of Ryno was a beam of fire! But they had refted in the narrow houfe: their voice had ceafed in Selma. Ullin had returned, one day, from the chafe, before the heroes fell. He heard their ftrife on the hill; their fong was foft but fad! They mourned the fall of Morar,

firſt of mortal men! His ſoul was like the ſoul of Fingal; his ſword like the ſword of Oſcar. But he fell, and his father mourned: his ſiſter's eyes were full of tears. Minona's eyes were full of tears, the ſiſter of car-borne Morar. She retired from the ſong of Ullin, like the moon in the weſt, when ſhe foreſees the ſhower, and hides her fair head in a cloud. I touched the harp with Ullin; the ſong of mourning roſe!

RYNO.

The wind and the rain are paſt: calm is the noon of day. The clouds are divided in heaven. Over the green hills flies the inconſtant ſun. Red through the ſtony vale comes down the ſtream of the hill. Sweet are thy murmurs, O ſtream! but more ſweet is the voice I hear. It is the voice of Alpin, the ſon of ſong, mourning for the dead! Bent is his head of age; red his tearful eye. Alpin, thou ſon of ſong, why alone on the ſilent hill? why complaineſt thou, as a blaſt in the wood; as a wave on the lonely ſhore?

ALPIN.

My tears, O Ryno! are for the dead; my voice for thoſe that have paſſed away. Tall thou art on the hill; fair among the ſons of the vale. But thou ſhalt fall like Morar*;

* Mŏr-ĕr, *great man.*

the

the mourner ſhall ſit on thy tomb. The hills ſhall know thee no more; thy bow ſhall lie in thy hall unſtrung!

Thou wert ſwift, O Morar! as a roe on the deſart; terrible as a meteor of fire. Thy wrath was as the ſtorm Thy ſword in battle, as lightning in the field. Thy voice was a ſtream after rain; like thunder on diſtant hills. Many fell by thy arm; they were conſumed in the flames of thy wrath. But when thou didſt return from war, how peaceful was thy brow! Thy face was like the ſun after rain; like the moon in the ſilence of night; calm as the breaſt of the lake when the loud wind is laid.

Narrow is thy dwelling now! dark the place of thine abode! With three ſteps I compaſs thy grave, O thou who waſt ſo great before! Four ſtones, with their heads of moſs, are the only memorial of thee. A tree with ſcarce a leaf, long graſs, which whiſtles in the wind, mark to the hunter's eye the grave of the mighty Morar. Morar! thou art low indeed. Thou haſt no mother to mourn thee; no maid with her tears of love. Dead is ſhe that brought thee forth. Fallen is the daughter of Morglan.

Who on his ſtaff is this? who is this, whoſe head is white with age? whoſe eyes are red with tears? who quakes at every ſtep? It is thy father *, O Morar! the father of no ſon

* Torman, the ſon of Carthul, lord of I-mora, one of the weſtern iſles.

but

but thee. He heard of thy fame in war; he heard of foes diſperſed. He heard of Morar's renown; why did he not hear of his wound? Weep, thou father of Morar! weep; but thy ſon heareth thee not. Deep is the ſleep of the dead; low their pillow of duſt. No more ſhall he hear thy voice; no more awake at thy call. When ſhall it be morn in the grave, to bid the ſlumberer awake? Farewel, thou braveſt of men! thou conqueror in the field! but the field ſhall ſee thee no more; nor the dark wood be lightened with the ſplendour of thy ſteel. Thou haſt left no ſon. The ſong ſhall preſerve thy name. Future times ſhall hear of thee; they ſhall hear of the fallen Morar!

The grief of all aroſe, but moſt the burſting ſigh of Armin *. He remembers the death of his ſon, who fell in the days of his youth. Carmor † was near the hero, the chief of the echoing Galmal. Why burſts the ſigh of Armin? he ſaid. Is there a cauſe to mourn? The ſong comes, with its muſic, to melt and pleaſe the ſoul. It is like ſoft miſt, that, riſing from a lake, pours on the ſilent vale; the green flowers are filled with dew, but the ſun returns in his ſtrength, and the miſt is gone. Why art thou ſad, O Armin, chief of ſea-ſurrounded Gorma?

* Armin, *a hero.* He was chief or petty king of Gorma, *i. e. the blue iſland,* ſuppoſed to be one of the Hebrides.

† Cear-mór, *a tall dark-complexioned man.*

Sad! I am! nor ſmall is my cauſe of woe! Carmor, thou haſt loſt no ſon; thou haſt loſt no daughter of beauty. Colgar the valiant lives; and Annira faireſt maid. The boughs of thy houſe aſcend, O Carmor! but Armin is the laſt of his race. Dark is thy bed, O Daura! deep thy ſleep in the tomb! When ſhalt thou awake with thy ſongs? with all thy voice of muſic?

Ariſe, winds of autumn, ariſe; blow along the heath! ſtreams of the mountains roar! roar, tempeſts, in the groves of my oaks! walk through broken clouds, O moon! ſhow thy pale face, at intervals! bring to my mind the night, when all my children fell; when Arindal the mighty fell; when Daura the lovely failed! Daura, my daughter! thou wert fair; fair as the moon on Fura *; white as the driven ſnow; ſweet as the breathing gale. Arindal, thy bow was ſtrong. Thy ſpear was ſwift in the field. Thy look was like miſt on the wave: thy ſhield, a red cloud in a ſtorm. Armar, renowned in war, came, and ſought Daura's love. He was not long refuſed: fair was the hope of their friends!

Erath, ſon of Odgal, repined: his brother had been ſlain by Armar. He came diſguiſed like a ſon of the ſea: fair was his ſkiff on the wave; white his locks of age; calm his ſerious brow. Faireſt of women, he ſaid, lovely daughter of Armin! a rock not diſtant

* Fuar-a, *cold iſland.*

in the ſea, bears a tree on its ſide; red ſhines the fruit afar! There Armar waits for Daura. I come to carry his love! She went; ſhe called on Armar. Nought anſwered, but the * ſon of the rock, Armar, my love! my love! why tormenteſt thou me with fear? hear, ſon of Arnart, hear: it is Daura who calleth thee! Erath the traitor fled laughing to the land. She lifted up her voice; ſhe called for her brother and her father. Arindal! Armin! none to relieve your Daura!

Her voice came over the ſea. Arindal my ſon deſcended from the hill; rough in the ſpoils of the chaſe. His arrows rattled by his ſide; his bow was in his hand: five dark grey dogs attend his ſteps. He ſaw fierce Erath on the ſhore: he ſeized and bound him to an oak. Thick wind the thongs † of the hide around his limbs; he loads the wind with his groans. Arindal aſcends the deep in his boat, to bring Daura to land. Armar came in his wrath, and let fly the grey-feathered ſhaft. It ſung; it ſunk in thy heart, O Arindal my ſon! for Erath the traitor thou diedſt. The oar is ſtopped at once; he panted on the rock and expired. What is thy grief, O Daura, when

* By *the ſon of the rock* the poet means the echoing back of the human voice from a rock. The vulgar were of opinion, that this repetition of ſound was made by a ſpirit within the rock; and they, on that account, called it *mac talla*; *the ſon who dwells in the rock.*

† The poet here only means that Erath was bound with leathern thongs.

round thy feet is poured thy brother's blood! The boat is broken in twain. Armar plunges into the ſea, to reſcue his Daura, or die. Sudden a blaſt from the hill came over the waves. He ſunk, and he roſe no more.

Alone, on the ſea-beat rock, my daughter was heard to complain. Frequent and loud were her cries. What could her father do? All night I ſtood on the ſhore. I ſaw her by the faint beam of the moon. All night I heard her cries. Loud was the wind; the rain beat hard on the hill. Before morning appeared, her voice was weak. It died away, like the evening-breeze among the graſs of the rocks. Spent with grief ſhe expired; and left thee, Armin, alone. God is my ſtrength in war! fallen my pride among women! When the ſtorms aloft ariſe; when the north lifts the wave on high; I ſit by the ſounding ſhore, and look on the fatal rock. Often by the ſetting moon, I ſee the ghoſts of my children. Half-viewleſs, they walk in mournful conference together. Will none of you ſpeak in pity? They do not regard their father. I am ſad, O Carmor, nor ſmall is my cauſe of woe!

Such were the words of the bards in the days of ſong; when the king heard the muſic of harps, the tales of other times! The chiefs gathered from all their hills, and heard the lovely ſound. They praiſed the voice * of Cona! the firſt among a thouſand bards! But

* Oſſian is ſometimes poetically called *the voice of Cona.*

age

age is now on my tongue; my ſoul has failed! I hear, at times, the ghoſts of bards, and learn their pleaſant ſong. But memory fails on my mind. I hear the call of years! They ſay, as they paſs along, why does Oſſian ſing? Soon ſhall he lie in the narrow houſe, and no bard ſhall raiſe his fame! Roll on, ye dark-brown years; ye bring no joy on your courſe! Let the tomb open to Oſſian, for his ſtrength has failed. The ſons of ſong are gone to reſt. My voice remains, like a blaſt, that roars, lonely, on a ſea-ſurrounding rock, after the winds are laid. The dark moſs whiſtles there; the diſtant mariner ſees the waving trees!

F I N G A L,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

ARGUMENT to BOOK I.

Cuthullin (general of the Irifh tribes, in the minority of Cormac, king of Ireland) fitting alone beneath a tree, at the gate of Tura, a caftle of Ulfter (the other chiefs having gone on a hunting party to Cromla, a neighbouring hill), is informed of the landing of Swaran, king of Lochlin, by Moran, the fon of Fithil, one of his fcouts. He convenes the chiefs; a council is held, and difputes run high about giving battle to the enemy. Connal, the petty king of Togorma, and an intimate friend of Cuthullin, was for retreating, till Fingal, king of thofe Caledonians who inhabited the north-weft coaft of Scotland, whofe aid had been previoufly folicited, fhould arrive; but Calmar, the fon of Matha, lord of Lara, a country in Connaught, was for engaging the enemy immediately. Cuthullin, of himfelf willing to fight, went into the opinion of Calmar. Marching towards the enemy, he miffed three of his braveft heroes, Fergus, Duchomar, and Cathba. Fergus arriving, tells Cuthullin of the death of the two other chiefs; which introduces the affecting epifode of Morna, the daughter of Cormac. The army of Cuthullin is defcried at a diftance by Swaran, who fent the fon of Arno to obferve the motions of the enemy, while he himfelf ranged his forces in order of battle. The fon of Arno returning to Swaran, defcribes to him Cuthullin's chariot, and the terrible appearance of that hero. The armies engage, but night coming on, leaves the victory undecided. Cuthullin, according to the hofpitality of the times, fends to Swaran a formal invitation to a feaft, by his bard Carril, the fon of Kinfena. Swaran refufes to come. Carril relates to Cuthullin the ftory of Grudar and Braffolis. A party, by Conal's advice, is fent to obferve the enemy; which clofes the action of the firft day.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK I.

CUTHULLIN * ſat by Tura's wall: by the tree of the ruſtling ſound. His ſpear leaned againſt a rock. His ſhield lay on graſs,

* Cuthullin the ſon of Semo and grandſon to Caithbat, a druid celebrated in tradition for his wiſdom and valour. Cuthullin when very young married Bragela the daughter of Sorglan, and paſſing over into Ireland, lived ſome time with Connal, grandſon by a daughter to Congal the petty king of Ulſter. His wiſdom and valour in a ſhort time gained him ſuch reputation, that in the minority of Cormac the ſupreme king of Ireland, he was choſen guardian to the young king, and ſole manager of the war againſt Swaran king of Lochlin. After a ſeries of great actions he was killed in battle ſomewhere in Connaught, in the twenty-ſeventh year of his age. He was ſo remarkable for his ſtrength, that to deſcribe a ſtrong man it has paſſed into a proverb, "He has the ſtrength of Cuthullin." They ſhew the remains of his palace at Dunſcaich in the Iſle of Skye; and a ſtone to which he bound his dog Luath, goes ſtill by his name.

by his ſide. Amid his thoughts of mighty Carbar *, a hero ſlain by the chief in war; the ſcout † of ocean comes, Moran ‡ the ſon of Fithil!

"Ariſe," ſays the youth, "Cuthullin, ariſe. I ſee the ſhips of the north! Many, chief of men, are the foe. Many the heroes of the ſea-borne Swaran!" "Moran!" replied the blue-eyed chief, "thou ever trembleſt, ſon of Fithil! Thy fears have increaſed the foe. It is Fingal, king § of deſerts, with aid to green Erin of ſtreams." "I beheld their chief," ſays Moran, "tall as a glittering rock. His

* Cairbar or Cairbre, ſignifies *a ſtrong man*.

† Cuthullin having previous intelligence of the invaſion intended by Swaran, ſent ſcouts all over the coaſt of Ullin or Ulſter, to give early notice of the firſt appearance of the enemy, at the ſame time that he ſent Munan the ſon of Stirmal to implore the aſſiſtance of Fingal. He himſelf collected the flower of the Iriſh youth to Tura, a caſtle on the coaſt, to ſtop the progreſs of the enemy till Fingal ſhould arrive from Scotland. We may conclude from Cuthullin's applying ſo early for foreign aid, that the Iriſh were not then ſo numerous as they have ſince been; which is a great preſumption againſt the high antiquities of that people. We have the teſtimony of Tacitus, that one legion only was thought ſufficient, in the time of Agricola, to reduce the whole iſland under the Roman yoke; which would not probably have been the caſe had the iſland been inhabited for any number of centuries before.

‡ Moran ſignifies *many*; and Fithil, or rather Fili, *an inferior bard*.

§ Fingal the ſon of Comhal and Morna the daughter of Thaddu. His grandfather was Trathal, and great grandfather Trenmor, both of whom are often mentioned in the poem.

ſpear

ſpear is a blaſted pine. His ſhield the riſing moon! He ſat on the ſhore! like a cloud of miſt on the ſilent hill! Many, chief of heroes! I ſaid, Many are our hands of war. Well art thou named, the Mighty Man: but many mighty men are ſeen from Tura's windy walls."

"He ſpoke, like a wave on a rock, who in this land appears like me? Heroes ſtand not in my preſence: they fall to earth from my hand. Who can meet Swaran in fight? Who but Fingal, king of Selma of ſtorms? Once we wreſtled on Malmor*; our heels overturned the woods. Rocks fell from their place; rivulets, changing their courſe, fled murmuring from our ſide. Three days we renewed the ſtrife; heroes ſtood at a diſtance and trembled. On the fourth, Fingal ſays, that the king of the ocean fell! but Swaran ſays, he ſtood! Let dark Cuthullin yield to him, that is ſtrong as the ſtorms of his land!"

"No!" replied the blue-eyed chief, "I never yield to mortal man! Dark Cuthullin ſhall be great or dead! Go, ſon of Fithil, take my ſpear. Strike the ſounding ſhield of Semo†. It hangs at Tura's ruſtling gate. The

* Meal-mór, *a great hill.*

† Cabait, or rather Cathbait, grandfather to the hero, was ſo remarkable for his valour, that his ſhield was made uſe of to alarm his poſterity to the battles of the family. We find Fingal making the ſame uſe of his own ſhield in the 4th book. A horn was the moſt common inſtrument to call the army together.

ſound of peace is not its voice! My heroes ſhall hear and obey." He went. He ſtruck the boſſy ſhield. The hills, the rocks reply. The ſound ſpreads along the wood: deer ſtart by the lake of rocs. Curach * leaps from the ſounding rock; and Connal of the bloody ſpear! Crugal's † breaſt of ſnow beats high. The ſon of Favi leaves the dark-brown hind. It is the ſhield of war, ſaid Ronnar! the ſpear of Cuthullin, ſaid Lugar! ſon of the ſea put on thy arms! Calmar lift thy ſounding ſteel! Puno! dreadful hero, ariſe! Cairbar from thy red tree of Cromla! Bend thy knee, O Eth! deſcend from the ſtreams of Lena. Ca-tol ſtretch thy ſide as thou moveſt along the whiſtling heath of Mora: thy ſide that is white as the foam of the troubled ſea, when the dark winds pour it on rocky Cuthon ‡.

Now I behold the chiefs, in the pride of their former deeds! Their ſouls are kindled at the battles of old; at the actions of other times. Their eyes are flames of fire. They roll in ſearch of the foes of the land. Their mighty hands are on their ſwords. Lightning pours from their ſides of ſteel. They come like ſtreams from the mountains; each ruſhes roaring from his hill. Bright are the chiefs of battle, in the armour of their fathers. Gloomy and dark their heroes follow, like the gather-

* Curach ſignifies *the madneſs of battle.*
† Cruth-geal, *fair-complexioned.*
‡ Cu-thon, *the mournful ſound of waves.*

ing

ing of the rainy clouds behind the red meteors of heaven. The ſounds of craſhing arms aſcend. The grey dogs howl between. Unequal burſts the ſong of battle. Rocking Cromla * echoes round. On Lena's duſky heath they ſtand, like miſt that ſhades the hills of autumn: when broken and dark it ſettles high, and lifts its head to heaven!

"Hail," ſaid Cuthullin, "ſons of the narrow vales! hail, hunters of the deer! Another ſport is drawing near: It is like the dark rolling of that wave on the coaſt! Or ſhall we fight, ye ſons of war! or yield green Erin † to Lochlin! O Connal ‡ ſpeak, thou firſt of men! thou breaker of the ſhields! thou haſt often fought with Lochlin: wilt thou lift thy father's ſpear?"

"Cuthullin!" calm the chief replied, "the ſpear of Connal is keen. It delights to ſhine in battle; to mix with the blood of thouſands. But though my hand is bent on fight, my

* Crom-leach ſignified a place of worſhip among the Druids. It is here the proper name of a hill on the coaſt of Ullin or Ulſter.

† Ireland, ſo called from a colony that ſettled there called Falans. Inis-fail, the iſland of the Fa-il or Falans.

‡ Connal, the friend of Cuthullin, was the ſon of Caith-bait prince of the Tongorma or the *iſland of blue waves*, probably one of the Hebrides. His mother was Fioncoma the daughter of Congal. He had a ſon by Foba of Conacharneſſar, who was afterwards petty king of Ulſter. For his ſervices in the war againſt Swaran he had lands conferred on him, which, from his name, were called Tir-chonnuil or Tir-connel, *i. e.* the land of Connal.

heart

heart is for the peace of Erin *. Behold, thou first in Córmac's war, the sable fleet of Swaran. His masts are many on our coast, like reeds in the lake of Lego. His ships are forests clothed with mists, when the trees yield by turns to the squally wind. Many are his chiefs in battle. Connal is for peace! Fingal would shun his arm the first of mortal men! Fingal, who scatters the mighty, as stormy winds the heath; when streams roar through echoing Cona: and night settles with all her clouds on the hill!

"Fly, thou man of peace," said Colmar †, "fly," said the son of Matha; "go, Connal, to thy silent hills, where the spear never brightens in war! Pursue the dark-brown deer of Cromla: stop with thine arrows the bounding roes of Lena. But, blue-eyed son of Semo, Cuthullin, ruler of the field, scatter thou the sons of Lochlin ‡! roar through the ranks of their pride. Let no vessel of the kingdom of Snow bound on the dark-rolling waves of Inistore §. Rise, ye dark winds of Erin, rise! roar whirlwinds of Lara of hinds! Amid the tempest let me die, torn, in a cloud, by angry

* Erin, a name of Ireland; from *ear* or *iar* West, and *in* an island. This name was not always confined to Ireland, for there is the highest probability that the *Ierne* of the ancients was Britain to the North of the Forth. For Ierne is said to be the North of Britain, which could not be meant of Ireland. STRABO, l. 2. & 4. CASAUB. l. 1.

† Calm-er, *a strong man*.

‡ The Galic name of Scandinavia in general.

§ The Orkney islands.

ghosts

ghoſts of men; amid the tempeſt let Calmar die, if ever chaſe was ſport to him, ſo much as the battle of ſhields!"

"Calmar!" Connal ſlow replied, "I never fled, young ſon of Matha! I was ſwift with my friends in fight; but ſmall is the fame of Connal! The battle was won in my preſence; the valiant overcame! But, ſon of Semo, hear my voice, regard the ancient throne of Cormac. Give wealth and half the land for peace, till Fingal ſhall arrive on our coaſt. Or, if war be thy choice, I lift the ſword and ſpear. My joy ſhall be in the midſt of thouſands; my ſoul ſhall lighten through the gloom of the fight!"

"To me," Cuthullin replies, "pleaſant is the noiſe of arms! pleaſant as the thunder of heaven, before the ſhower of ſpring! But gather all the ſhining tribes, that I may view the ſons of war! Let them paſs along the heath, bright as the ſun-ſhine before a ſtorm; when the weſt wind collects the clouds, and Morven echoes over all her oaks! But where are my friends in battle? The ſupporters of my arm in danger? Where art thou, white-boſomed Câthbar? Where is that cloud in war, Duchômar *? Haſt thou left me, O Fergus †! in the day of the ſtorm? Fergus, firſt in our joy at the feaſt! ſon of Roſſa! arm of death! comeſt thou like a roe from Malmor? Like a

* Dubhchomar, *a black well-made man*

† Fear-guth, *the man of the word*; or a commander of an army.

hart

hart from thy echoing hills? Hail, thou ſon of Roſſa! what ſhades the ſoul of war?"

"Four ſtones *," replied the chief, "riſe on the grave of Câthba. Theſe hands have laid in earth Duchômar, that cloud in war! Câthba, ſon of Torman! thou wert a ſun-beam in Erin. And thou, O valiant Duchômar! a miſt of the marſhy Lano; when it moves on the plains of autumn, bearing the death of thouſands along. Morna! faireſt of maids! calm is thy ſleep in the cave of the rock! Thou haſt fallen in darkneſs, like a ſtar, that ſhoots acroſs the deſert; when the traveller is alone, and mourns the tranſient beam!"

"Say," ſaid Semo's blue-eyed ſon, "ſay how fell the chiefs of Erin? Fell they by the ſons of Lochlin, ſtriving in the battle of heroes? Or what confines the ſtrong in arms to the dark and narrow houſe?"

"Câthba," replied the hero, "fell by the ſword of Duchômar at the oak of the noiſy ſtreams. Duchômar came to Tura's cave; he ſpoke to the lovely Morna. Morna †, faireſt

* This paſſage alludes to the manner of burial among the ancient Scots. They opened a grave ſix or eight feet deep: the bottom was lined with fine clay; and on this they laid the body of the deceaſed, and, if a warrior, his ſword, and the heads of twelve arrows by his ſide. Above they laid another ſtratum of clay, in which they placed the horn of a deer, the ſymbol of hunting. The whole was covered with a fine mold, and four ſtones placed on end to mark the extent of the grave. Theſe are the four ſtones alluded to here.

† Muirne, or Morna, *a woman beloved by all.*

among women, lovely daughter of ſtrong-armed Cormac! Why in the circle of ſtones? in the cave of the rock alone? The ſtream murmurs along. The old tree groans in the wind. The lake is troubled before thee; dark are the clouds of the ſky! But thou art ſnow on the heath; thy hair is the miſt of Cromla; when it curls on the hill; when it ſhines to the beam of the weſt! Thy breaſts are two ſmooth rocks ſeen from Branno of ſtreams. Thy arms, like two white pillars, in the halls of the great Fingal.

"From whence," the fair-haired maid replied, "from whence, Duchômar, moſt gloomy of men? Dark are thy brows and terrible! Red are thy rolling eyes! Does Swaran appear on the ſea? What of the foe Duchômar?" "From the hill I return, O Morna, from the hill of the dark-brown hinds. Three have I ſlain with my bended yew. Three with my long bounding dogs of the chaſe. Lovely daughter of Cormac, I love thee as my ſoul! I have ſlain one ſtately deer for thee. High was his branchy head; and fleet his feet of wind." "Duchômar!" calm the maid replied, "I love thee not, thou gloomy man! hard is thy heart of rock; dark is thy terrible brow. But Câthba, young ſon of Torman *, thou art the love of Morna. Thou art a ſunbeam, in the day of the gloomy ſtorm. Saweſt

* Torman, *thunder*. This is the true origin of the Jupiter Taramis of the ancients.

thou the ſon of Torman, lovely on the hill of his hinds? Here the daughter of Cormac waits the coming of Câthba!"

"Long ſhall Morna wait," Duchômar ſaid, "long ſhall Morna wait for Câthba! Behold this ſword unſheathed! Here wanders the blood of Câthba. Long ſhall Morna wait. He fell by the ſtream of Branno! On Croma I will raiſe his tomb, daughter of blue-ſhielded Cormac! Turn on Duchômar thine eyes; his arm is ſtrong as a ſtorm." "Is the ſon of Torman fallen?" ſaid the wildly burſting voice of the maid, "Is he fallen on his echoing hills, the youth with the breaſt of ſnow? The firſt in the chaſe of hinds? The foe of the ſtrangers of ocean? Thou art dark * to me, Duchômar, cruel is thine arm to Morna! Give me that ſword, my foe! I love the wandering blood of Câthba!"

He gave the ſword to her tears. She pierced his manly breaſt! He fell, like the bank of a mountain-ſtream, and ſtretching forth his hand, he ſpoke: "Daughter of blue-ſhielded Cormac! Thou haſt ſlain me in youth! the ſword is cold in my breaſt: Morna, I feel it cold. Give me to Moina † the maid. Duchômar was the dream of her night! She will raiſe my tomb; the hunter ſhall raiſe my fame. But draw the ſword from my breaſt. Morna, the ſteel is cold!" She came, in all

* She alludes to his name, *the dark man.*

† Moina, *ſoft in temper and perſon.*

her tears, ſhe came; ſhe drew the ſword from his breaſt. He pierced her white ſide! He ſpread her fair locks on the ground! Her burſting blood ſounds from her ſide: her white arm is ſtained with red. Rolling in death ſhe lay. The cave re-echoed to her ſighs.

"Peace," ſaid Cuthullin, "to the ſouls of the heroes! their deeds were great in fight. Let them ride around* me on clouds. Let them ſhew their features of war. My ſoul ſhall then be firm in danger; mine arm like the thunder of heaven! But be thou on a moon-beam, O Morna! near the window of my reſt; when my thoughts are of peace; when the din of arms is paſt. Gather the ſtrength of the tribes! Move to the wars of Erin! Attend the car of my battles! Rejoice in the noiſe of my courſe! Place three ſpears by my ſide: follow the bounding of my ſteeds! That my ſoul may be ſtrong in my friends, when battle darkens round the beams of my ſteel!"

As ruſhes a ſtream of foam from the dark ſhady deep of Cromla; when the thunder is travelling above, and dark-brown night ſits on half the hill. Through the breaches of the tempeſt look forth the dim faces of ghoſts. So fierce, ſo vaſt, ſo terrible ruſhed on the ſons of

* It was the opinion then, as indeed it is to this day, of ſome of the Highlanders, that the ſouls of the deceaſed hovered round their living friends; and ſometimes appeared to them when they were about to enter on any great undertaking.

Erin. The chief, like a whale of ocean, whom all his billows purſue, poured valour forth, as a ſtream, rolling his might along the ſhore. The ſons of Lochlin heard the noiſe, as the ſound of a winter-ſtorm. Swaran ſtruck his boſſy ſhield : he called the ſon of Arno, "What murmur rolls along the hill, like the gathered flies of the eve ? The ſons of Erin deſcend, or ruſtling winds roar in the diſtant wood ! Such is the noiſe of Gormal, before the white tops of my waves ariſe. O ſon of Arno ! aſcend the hill ; view the dark face of the heath !"

He went. He, trembling, ſwift returned. His eyes rolled wildly round. His heart beat high againſt his ſide. His words were faultering, broken, ſlow. "Ariſe, ſon of ocean, ariſe, chief of the dark-brown ſhields ! I ſee the dark, the mountain-ſtream of battle ! the deep-moving ſtrength of the ſons of Erin ! The car, the car of war comes on, like the flame of death ! the rapid car of Cuthullin, the noble ſon of Semo ! It bends behind like a wave near a rock ; like the ſun-ſtreaked miſt of the heath. Its ſides are emboſſed with ſtones, and ſparkle like the ſea round the boat of night. Of poliſhed yew is its beam ; its ſeat of the ſmootheſt bone. The ſides are repleniſhed with ſpears ; the bottom is the footſtool of heroes ! Before the right ſide of the car is ſeen the ſnorting horſe ! The high-maned, broad-breaſted, proud, wide-leaping, ſtrong ſteed of the hill. Loud and reſounding is his hoof ; the ſpreading of his mane above is like

a ſtream

a ſtream of ſmoke on a ridge of rocks. Bright are the ſides of the ſteed! his name is Sulin-Sifadda!"

"Before the left ſide of the car is ſeen the ſnorting horſe! The thin-maned, high-headed, ſtrong-hoofed, fleet, bounding ſon of the hill: his name is Duſronnal, among the ſtormy ſons of the ſword! A thouſand thongs bind the car on high. Hard poliſhed bits ſhine in a wreath of foam. Thin thongs, bright-ſtudded with gems, bend on the ſtately necks of the ſteeds. The ſteeds that like wreaths of miſts fly over the ſtreamy vales! The wildneſs of deer is in their courſe, the ſtrength of eagles deſcending on their prey. Their noiſe is like the blaſt of winter, on the ſides of the ſnow-headed Gormal.

"Within the car is ſeen the chief; the ſtrong-armed ſon of the ſword. The hero's name is Cuthullin, ſon of Semo king of ſhells. His red cheek is like my poliſhed yew. The look of his blue-rolling eye is wide, beneath the dark arch of his brow. His hair flies from his head like a flame, as bending forward he wields the ſpear. Fly, king of ocean, fly! He comes, like a ſtorm, along the ſtreamy vale!"

"When did I fly?" replied the king. "When fled Swaran from the battle of ſpears? When did I ſhrink from danger, chief of the little ſoul? I met the ſtorm of Gormal, when the foam of my waves beat high. I met the ſtorm of the clouds; ſhall Swaran fly from

 a hero?

a hero? Were Fingal himſelf before me, my ſoul ſhould not darken with fear. Ariſe to battle, my thouſands! pour round me like the echoing main. Gather round the bright ſteel of your king; ſtrong as the rocks of my land; that meet the ſtorm with joy, and ſtretch their dark pines to the wind!"

Like autumn's dark ſtorms pouring from two echoing hills, toward each other approached the heroes. Like two deep ſtreams from high rocks meeting, mixing, roaring on the the plain; loud, rough, and dark in battle meet Lochlin and Inis-fail. Chief mixes his ſtrokes with chief, and man with man; ſteel, clanging, ſounds on ſteel. Helmets are cleft on high. Blood burſts and ſmokes around. Strings murmur on the poliſhed yews. Darts ruſh along the ſky. Spears fall like the circles of light, which gild the face of night. As the noiſe of the troubled ocean, when roll the waves on high. As the laſt peal of thunder in heaven, ſuch is the din of war! Though Cormac's hundred bards were there to give the fight to ſong; feeble was the voice of a hundred bards to ſend the deaths to future times! For many were the deaths of heroes; wide poured the blood of the brave!

Mourn, ye ſons of ſong, mourn the death of the noble Sithâllin*. Let the ſighs of Fiöna riſe, on the lone plains of her lovely

* Sithâllin ſignifies *a handſome man*; Fiöna, *a fair maid*; and Ardan, *pride*.

Ardan.

Ardan. They fell, like two hinds of the desert, by the hands of the mighty Swaran; when, in the midst of thousands, he roared; like the shrill spirit of a storm. He sits dim, on the clouds of the north, and enjoys the death of the mariner. Nor slept thy hand by thy side, chief of the isle of mist *! many were the deaths of thine arm, Cuthullin, thou son of Semo! His sword was like the beam of heaven when it pierces the sons of the vale; when the people are blasted and fall, and all the hills are burning around. Dusronnal † snorted over the bodies of heroes. Sisadda ‡ bathed his hoof in blood. The battle lay behind them, as groves overturned on the desert of Cromla; when the blast has passed the heath, laden with the spirits of night!

Weep on the rocks of roaring winds, O maid of Inistore §! Bend thy fair head over

* The Isle of Sky; not improperly called the *isle of mist*, as its high hills, which catch the clouds from the western ocean, occasion almost continual rains.

† One of Cuthullin's horses. Dubhstron gheal.

‡ Sith-sadda, *i. e. a long stride*.

§ *The maid of Inistore* was the daughter of Gorlo king of Inistore or Orkney islands. Trenar was brother to the king of Iniscon, supposed to be one of the islands of Shetland. The Orkneys and Shetland were at that time subject to the king of Lochlin. We find that the dogs of Trenar are sensible at home of the death of their master, the very instant he is killed. It was the opinion of the times, that the souls of heroes went immediately after death to the hills of their country, and the scenes they frequented the most happy time of their life. It was thought too that dogs and horses saw the ghosts of the deceased.

the waves, thou lovelier than the ghosts of the hills; when it moves in a sun-beam, at noon, over the silence of Morven! He is fallen, thy youth is low! pale beneath the sword of Cuthullin! No more shall valour raise thy love to match the blood of kings. Trenar, graceful Trenar died, O maid of Inistore! His grey dogs are howling at home! they see his passing ghost. His bow is in the hall unstrung. No sound is in the hill of his hinds!

As roll a thousand waves to the rocks, so Swaran's host came on. As meets a rock a thousand waves, so Erin met Swaran of spears. Death raises all his voices around, and mixes with the sounds of shields. Each hero is a pillar of darkness; the sword a beam of fire in his hand. The field echoes from wing to wing, as a hundred hammers that rise, by turns, on the red sun of the furnace. Who are these on Lena's heath, these so gloomy and dark? Who are these like two clouds, and their swords like lightning above them? The little hills are troubled around; the rocks tremble with all their moss. Who is it but Ocean's son and the car-borne chief of Erin? Many are the anxious eyes of their friends, as they see them dim on the heath. But night conceals the chiefs in clouds, and ends the dreadful fight!

It was on Cromla's shaggy side that Dorglas had placed the deer *; the early fortune of the

* The ancient manner of preparing feasts after hunting, is handed down by tradition. A pit lined with smooth stones

the chafe, before the heroes left the hill. A hundred youths collect the heath; ten warriors wake the fire; three hundred chufe the polifhed ftones. The feaft is fmoaking wide! Cuthullin, chief of Erin's war, refumed his mighty foul. He ftood upon his beamy fpear, and fpoke to the fon of fongs; to Carril of other times, the grey-haired fon of Kinfena†. "Is this feaft fpread for me alone and the king of Lochlin on Erin's fhore; far from the deer of his hills, and founding halls of his feafts? Rife, Carril of other times; carry my words to Swaran. Tell him from the roaring of waters, that Cuthullin gives his feaft. Here let him liften to the found of my groves, amidft the clouds of night. For cold and bleak the bluftering winds rufh over the foam of his feas. Here let him praife the trembling harp, and hear the fongs of heroes!"

Old Carril went, with fofteft voice. He called the king of dark-brown fhields! "Rife from the fkins of thy chafe, rife, Swaran, king of groves! Cuthullin gives the joy of fhells. Partake the feaft of Erin's blue-eyed chief!"

ftones was made; and near it ftood a heap of fmooth flat ftones of the flint kind. The ftones as well as the pit were properly heated with heath. Then they laid fome venifon in the bottom, and a ftratum of the ftones above it; and thus they did alternately till the pit was full. The whole was covered over with heath to confine the fteam. Whether this is probable, I cannot fay; but fome pits are fhewn, which the vulgar fay, were ufed in that manner.

† Cean-feana, *i. e. the head of the people.*

He anſwered like the ſullen ſound of Cromla before a ſtorm. " Though all thy daughters, Inis-fail! ſhould ſtretch their arms of ſnow; ſhould raiſe the heavings of their breaſts, and ſoftly roll their eyes of love; yet, fixed as Lochlin's thouſand rocks, here Swaran ſhould remain; till morn, with the young beams of the eaſt, ſhall light me to the death of Cuthullin. Pleaſant to my ear is Lochlin's wind! It ruſhes over my ſeas! It ſpeaks aloft in all my ſhrouds, and brings my green foreſts to my mind: the green foreſts of Gormal, which often echoed to my winds, when my ſpear was red in the chaſe of the boar. Let dark Cuthullin yield to me the ancient throne of Cormac; or Erin's torrents ſhall ſhew from their hills the red foam of the blood of his pride!"

" Sad is the ſound of Swaran's voice," ſaid Carril of other times! " Sad to himſelf alone," ſaid the blue-eyed ſon of Semo. " But, Carril, raiſe the voice on high; tell the deeds of other times. Send thou the night away in ſong; and give the joy of grief. For many heroes and maids of love, have moved on Inis-fail: and lovely are the ſongs of woe that are heard in Albion's rocks; when the noiſe of the chaſe is paſt, and the ſtreams of Cona anſwer to the voice of Oſſian *."

* The Cona here mentioned is that ſmall river that runs through Glenco in Argyleſhire. One of the hills which environ that romantic valley is ſtill called Scornafena, or the hill of Fingal's people.

" In

"In other days *," Carril replies, "came the ſons of Ocean to Erin! a thouſand veſſels bounded on waves to Ullin's lovely plains. The ſons of Inis-fail aroſe, to meet the race of dark-brown ſhields. Cairbar, firſt of men, was there, and Grudar, ſtately youth! Long had they ſtrove for the ſpotted bull, that lowed on Golbun's † echoing heath. Each claimed him as his own. Death was often at the point of their ſteel! Side by ſide the heroes fought; the ſtrangers of Ocean fled. Whoſe name was fairer on the hill, than the name of Cairbar and Grudar! But ah! why ever lowed the bull, on Golbun's echoing heath. They ſaw him leaping like ſnow. The wrath of the chiefs returned!"

On Lubar's ‡ graſſy banks they fought; Grudar fell in his blood. Fierce Cairbar came to the vale, where Braſſolis §, faireſt of his ſiſters, all alone, raiſed the ſong of grief. She ſung of the actions of Grudar, the youth of her ſecret ſoul! She mourned him in the field of blood; but ſtill ſhe hoped for his return.

* This epiſode is introduced with propriety. Calmar and Connal, two of the Iriſh heroes, had diſputed warmly before the battle about engaging the enemy. Carril endeavours to reconcile them with the ſtory of Cairbar and Grudar; who, though enemies before, fought *ſide by ſide* in the war. The poet obtained his aim, for we find Calmar and Connal perfectly reconciled in the third book.

† Golb-bhean, as well as Cromleach, ſignifies *a crooked hill.*

‡ Lubar, a river in Ulſter. *Labhar*, loud, noiſy.

§ Braſſolis ſignifies *a woman with a white breaſt.*

turn. Her white bosom is seen from her robe, as the moon from the clouds of night, when its edge heaves white on the view, from the darkness which covers its orb. Her voice was softer than the harp to raise the song of grief. Her soul was fixed on Grudar. The secret look of her eye was his. "When shalt thou come in thine arms, thou mighty in the war?"

"Take, Brassolis," Cairbar came and said, "take, Brassolis, this shield of blood. Fix it on high within my hall, the armour of my foe! Her soft heart beat against her side. Distracted, pale, she flew. She found her youth in all his blood; she died on Cromla's heath. Here rests their dust, Cuthullin! these lonely yews sprung from their tombs, and shade them from the storm. Fair was Brassolis on the plain! Stately was Grudar on the hill! The bard shall preserve their names, and send them down to future times!"

"Pleasant is thy voice, O Carril," said the blue-eyed chief of Erin. "Pleasant are the words of other times! They are like the calm shower of spring; when the sun looks on the field, and the light cloud flies over the hills. O strike the harp in praise of my love, the lonely sun-beam of Dunscaith! Strike the harp in the praise of Bragéla; she that I left in the Isle of Mist, the spouse of Semo's son! Dost thou raise thy fair face from the rock to find the sails of Cuthullin? The sea is rolling distant far; its white foam deceives thee for

my ſails. Retire, for it is night, my love; the dark winds ſing in thy hair. Retire to the halls of my feaſts; think of the times that are paſt. I will not return till the ſtorm of war is ceaſed. O Connal! ſpeak of war and arms, and ſend her from my mind. Lovely with her flowing hair is the white-boſomed daughter of Sorglan."

Connal, ſlow to ſpeak, replied, "Guard again the race of Ocean. Send thy troop of night abroad, and watch the ſtrength of Swaran. Cuthullin! I am for peace till the race of Selma come; till Fingal come, the firſt of men, and beam, like the ſun, on our fields!" The hero ſtruck the ſhield of alarms, the warriors of the night moved on! The reſt lay in the heath of the deer, and ſlept beneath the duſky wind. The ghoſts * of the lately dead were near, and ſwam on the gloomy clouds: and far diſtant, in the dark ſilence of Lena, the feeble voices of death were faintly heard.

* It was long the opinion of the ancient Scots, that a ghoſt was heard ſhrieking near the place where a death was to happen ſoon after. The accounts given, to this day, among the vulgar, of this extraordinary matter, are very poetical. The ghoſt comes mounted on a meteor, and ſurrounds twice or thrice the place deſtined for the perſon to die; and then goes along the road through which the funeral is to paſs, ſhrieking at intervals; at laſt, the meteor and ghoſt diſappear above the burial place.

F I N G A L,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK II.

ARGUMENT to BOOK II.

The ghoſt of Crugal, one of the Iriſh heroes who was killed in battle, appearing to Connal, foretels the defeat of Cuthullin in the next battle; and earneſtly adviſes him to make peace with Swaran. Connal communicates the viſion; but Cuthullin is inflexible; from a principle of honour he would not be the firſt to ſue for peace, and he reſolved to continue the war. Morning comes; Swaran propoſes diſhonourable terms to Cuthullin, which are rejected. The battle begins, and is obſtinately fought for ſome time, until, upon the flight of Grumal, the whole Iriſh army gave way. Cuthullin and Connal cover their retreat: Carril leads them to a neighbouring hill, whither they are ſoon followed by Cuthullin himſelf, who deſcries the fleet of Fingal making towards the coaſt; but, night coming on, he loſt ſight of it again. Cuthullin, dejected after his defeat, attributes his ill ſucceſs to the death of Ferda his friend, whom he had killed ſome time before. Carril, to ſhew that ill ſucceſs did not always attend thoſe who innocently killed their friends, introduces the epiſode of Comal and Galvina.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK II.

CONNAL * lay by the ſound of the mountain-ſtream, beneath the aged tree. A ſtone, with its moſs, ſupported his head. Shrill through the heath of Lena, he heard the voice of night. At diſtance from the heroes he lay; the ſon of the ſword feared no foe! The hero beheld, in his reſt, a dark-red ſtream of fire ruſhing down from the hill. Crugal ſat upon the beam, a chief who fell in fight. He fell by the hand of Swaran, ſtriving in the battle of heroes. His face is like the beam of the ſetting moon. His robes are of the clouds of the hill.

* The ſcene here deſcribed will appear natural to thoſe who have been in the highlands of Scotland. The poet removes him to a diſtance from the army, to add more horror to the deſcription of Crugal's ghoſt by the loneli-neſs of the place.

hill. His eyes are two decaying flames. Dark is the wound of his breaſt! "Crugal," ſaid the mighty Connal, ſon of Dedgal famed on the hill of hinds! "Why ſo pale and ſad, thou breaker of the ſhields? Thou haſt never been pale for fear! What diſturbs the departed Crugal?" Dim, and in tears, he ſtood and ſtretched his pale hand over the hero. Faintly he raiſed his feeble voice, like the gale of the reedy Lego!

"My ſpirit, Connal, is on my hills: my corſe on the ſands of Erin. Thou ſhalt never talk with Crugal, nor find his lone ſteps in the heath. I am light as the blaſt of Cromla. I move like the ſhadow of miſt! Connal, ſon of Colgar, I ſee a cloud of death: it hovers dark over the plains of Lena. The ſons of green Erin muſt fall. Remove from the field of ghoſts." Like the darkened moon he retired, in the midſt of the whiſtling blaſt. "Stay," ſaid the mighty Connal, "ſtay, my dark-red friend. Lay by that beam of heaven, ſon of the windy Cromla! What cave is thy lonely houſe? What green-headed hill the place of thy repoſe? Shall we not hear thee in the ſtorm? In the noiſe of the mountain-ſtream? When the feeble ſons of the wind come forth, and ſcarcely ſeen, paſs over the deſert?"

The ſoft-voiced Connal roſe, in the midſt of his ſounding arms. He ſtruck his ſhield above Cuthullin. The ſon of battle waked. "Why," ſaid the ruler of the car, "comes

Connal through my night? My ſpear might turn againſt the ſound; and Cuthullin mourn the death of his friend. Speak, Connal; ſon of Colgar, ſpeak, thy counſel is the ſun of heaven!" "Son of Semo!" replied the chief, "the ghoſt of Crugal came from his cave. The ſtars dim-twinkled through his form. His voice was like the ſound of a diſtant ſtream. He is a meſſenger of death! He ſpeaks of the dark and narrow houſe! Sue for peace, O chief of Erin! or fly over the heath of Lena."

"He ſpoke to Connal," replied the hero, "though ſtars dim-twinkled through his form! Son of Colgar, it was the wind that murmured acroſs thy ear. Or if it was the form * of Crugal, why didſt thou not force him to my ſight? Haſt thou inquired where is his cave? The houſe of that ſon of wind? My ſword might find that voice, and force his knowledge from Crugal. But ſmall is his knowledge, Connal; he was here to-day. He could not have gone beyond our hills! who could tell him there of our fall?" "Ghoſts fly on clouds, and ride on winds," ſaid Connal's voice of wiſdom. "They reſt together in their caves, and talk of mortal men."

* The poet teaches us the opinions that prevailed in his time concerning the ſtate of ſeparate ſouls. From Connal's expreſſion, "That the ſtars dim-twinkled through the form of Crugal," and Cuthullin's reply, we may gather that they both thought the ſoul was material: ſomething like the ειδωλον of the ancient Greeks.

"Then let them talk of mortal men; of every man but Erin's chief. Let me be forgot in their cave. I will not fly from Swaran! If fall I muſt, my tomb ſhall riſe, amidſt the fame of future times. The hunter ſhall ſhed a tear on my ſtone; ſorrow ſhall dwell round the high-boſomed Bragéla. I fear not death, to fly I fear! Fingal has ſeen me victorious! Thou dim phantom of the hill, ſhew thyſelf to me! come on thy beam of heaven, ſhew me my death in thine hand; yet I will not fly, thou feeble ſon of the wind! Go, ſon of Colgar, ſtrike the ſhield. It hangs between the ſpears. Let my warriors riſe to the ſound, in the midſt of the battles of Erin. Though Fingal delays his coming with the race of his ſtormy iſles; we ſhall fight, O Colgar's ſon, and die in the battle of heroes!"

The ſound ſpreads wide. The heroes riſe, like the breaking of a blue-rolling wave. They ſtood on the heath, like oaks with all their branches round them; when they echo to the ſtream of froſt, and their withered leaves are ruſtling to the wind! High Cromla's head of clouds is grey. Morning trembles on the half-enlightened ocean. The blue miſt ſwims ſlowly by, and hides the ſons of Inis-fail!

"Riſe, ye," ſaid the king of the dark-brown ſhields, "ye that came from Lochlin's waves. The ſons of Erin have fled from our arms; purſue them over the plains of Lena! Morla, go to Cormac's hall. Bid them yield to Swaran; before his people ſink to the tomb; and ſilence

ſilence ſpread over his iſle." They roſe ruſtling like a flock of ſea-fowl, when the waves expel them from the ſhore. Their ſound was like a thouſand ſtreams that meet in Cona's vale, when, after a ſtormy night, they turn their dark eddies beneath the pale light of the morn.

As the dark ſhades of autumn fly over hills of graſs: ſo gloomy, dark, ſucceſſive came the chiefs of Lochlin's echoing woods. Tall as the ſtag of Morven, moved ſtately before them the king. His ſhining ſhield is on his ſide, like a flame on the heath at night; when the world is ſilent and dark, and the traveller ſees ſome ghoſt ſporting in the beam! Dimly gleam the hills around, and ſhew indiſtinctly their oaks! A blaſt from the troubled ocean removed the ſettled miſt. The ſons of Erin appear, like a ridge of rocks on the coaſt; when mariners, on ſhores unknown, are trembling at veering winds!

"Go, Morla, go," ſaid the king of Lochlin, "offer peace to theſe! Offer the terms we give to kings, when nations bow down to our ſwords. When the valiant are dead in war; when virgins weep on the field!" Tall Morla came, the ſon of Swarth, and ſtately ſtrode the youth along! He ſpoke to Erin's blue-eyed chief, among the leſſer heroes. "Take Swaran's peace," the warrior ſpoke, "the peace he gives to kings, when nations bow to his ſword. Leave Erin's ſtreamy plains to us, and give thy ſpouſe and dog. Thy ſpouſe high-boſom'd heaving fair! Thy dog that over-

overtakes the wind! Give theſe to prove the weakneſs of thine arm; live then beneath our power!"

"Tell Swaran, tell that heart of pride, Cuthullin never yields. I give him the dark rolling ſea; I give his people graves in Erin. But never ſhall a ſtranger have the pleaſing ſun-beam of my love. No deer ſhall fly on Lochlin's hills, before ſwift-footed Luäth." "Vain ruler of the car," ſaid Morla, "wilt thou then fight the king? The king whoſe ſhips of many groves could carry off thine iſle? So little is thy green-hilled Erin to him who rules the ſtormy waves!" "In words I yield to many, Morla. My ſword ſhall yield to none. Erin ſhall own the ſway of Cormac, while Connal and Cuthullin live! O Connal, firſt of mighty men, thou hear'ſt the words of Morla. Shall thy thoughts then be of peace, thou breaker of the ſhields? Spirit of fallen Crugal! why didſt thou threaten us with death? The narrow houſe ſhall receive me, in the midſt of the light of renown. Exalt, ye ſons of Erin, exalt the ſpear and bend the bow: ruſh on the foe in darkneſs, as the ſpirits of ſtormy nights!"

Then diſmal, roaring, fierce, and deep the gloom of battle poured along; as miſt that is rolled on a valley, when ſtorms invade the ſilent ſun-ſhine of heaven! Cuthullin moves before in arms, like an angry ghoſt before a cloud; when meteors incloſe him with fire; when the dark winds are in his hand. Carril,

far

far on the heath, bids the horn of battle ſound. He raiſes the voice of ſong, and pours his ſoul into the minds of the brave.

"Where," ſaid the mouth of the ſong, "where is the fallen Crugal? He lies forgot on earth; the hall of ſhells * is ſilent. Sad is the ſpouſe of Crugal! She is a ſtranger † in the hall of her grief. But who is ſhe, that, like a ſun-beam, flies before the ranks of the foe? It is Degrena ‡, lovely fair, the ſpouſe of fallen Crugal. Her hair is on the wind behind. Her eye is red; her voice is ſhrill. Pale, empty is thy Crugal now! His form is in the cave of the hill. He comes to the ear of reſt; he raiſes his feeble voice; like the humming of the mountain-bee; like the collected flies of the eve! But Degrena falls like a cloud of the morn; the ſword of Lochlin is in her ſide. Cairbar, ſhe is fallen, the riſing thought of thy youth. She is fallen, O Cairbar, the thought of thy youthful hours!"

Fierce Cairbar heard the mournful ſound. He ruſhed along like ocean's whale. He ſaw the death of his daughter: he roared in the midſt of thouſands. His ſpear met a ſon of Lochlin! battle ſpreads from wing to wing!

* The ancient Scots, as well as the preſent Highlanders, drunk in ſhells; hence it is that we ſo often meet, in the old poetry, with *chief of ſhells*, and *the halls of ſhells*.

† Crugal had married Degrena but a little time before the battle, conſequently ſhe may with propriety be called a ſtranger in the hall of her grief.

‡ Deo-gréna ſignifies *a ſun-beam*.

As a hundred winds in Lochlin's groves; as fire in the pines of a hundred hills; ſo loud, ſo ruinous, ſo vaſt the ranks of men are hewn down. Cuthullin cut off heroes like thiſtle; Swaran waſted Erin. Curach fell by his hand, Cairbar of the boſſy ſhield! Morglan lies in laſting reſt! Ca-olt trembles as he dies! His white breaſt is ſtained with blood; his yellow hair ſtretched in the duſt of his native land! He often had ſpread the feaſt where he fell. He often there had raiſed the voice of the harp: when his dogs leapt round for joy; and the youths of the chaſe prepared the bow!

Still Swaran advanced, as a ſtream, that burſts from the deſert. The little hills are rolled in its courſe; the rocks are half-ſunk by its ſide! But Cuthullin ſtood before him, like a hill, that catches the clouds of heaven. The winds contend on its head of pines; the hail rattles on its rocks. But, firm in its ſtrength, it ſtands and ſhades the ſilent vale of Cona! ſo Cuthullin ſhaded the ſons of Erin, and ſtood in the midſt of thouſands. Blood riſes like the fount of a rock, from panting heroes around. But Erin falls on either wing, like ſnow in the day of the ſun.

"O ſons of Erin," ſaid Grumal, "Lochlin conquers on the field. Why ſtrive we as reeds againſt the wind? Fly to the hill of dark-brown hinds." He fled like the ſtag of Morven; his ſpear is a trembling beam of light behind him. Few fled with Grumal, chief of the little ſoul: they fell in the battle of heroes,

on

on Lena's echoing heath. High on his car, of many gems, the chief of Erin ſtood. He ſlew a mighty ſon of Lochlin, and ſpoke, in haſte, to Connal. "O Connal, firſt of mortal men, thou haſt taught this arm of death! Though Erin's ſons have fled, ſhall we not fight the foe? Carril, ſon of other times, carry my friends to that buſhy hill. Here, Connal, let us ſtand, like rocks, and ſave our flying friends."

Connal mounts the car of gems. They ſtretch their ſhields, like the darkened moon, the daughter of the ſtarry ſkies, when ſhe moves, a dun circle through heaven; and dreadful change is expected by men. Sithfadda panted up the hill, and Sronnal haughty ſteed. Like waves behind a whale behind them ruſhed the foe. Now on the riſing ſide of Cromla ſtood Erin's few ſad ſons; like a grove through which the flame had ruſhed, hurried on by the winds of the ſtormy night; diſtant, withered, dark they ſtand, with not a leaf to ſhake in the gale.

Cuthullin ſtood beſide an oak. He rolled his red eye in ſilence, and heard the wind in his buſhy hair; the ſcout of ocean came, Moran the ſon of Fithil. "The ſhips," he cried, "the ſhips of the lonely iſles. Fingal comes, the firſt of men, the breaker of the ſhields! The waves foam before his black prows! His maſts with ſails are like groves in clouds!" "Blow," ſaid Cuthullin, "blow ye winds that ruſh along my iſle of miſt. Come to the

death of thousands, O king of resounding Selma! Thy sails, my friend, are to me the clouds of the morning; thy ships the light of heaven; and thou thyself a pillar of fire that beams on the world by night. O Connal, first of men, how pleasing, in grief, are our friends! But the night is gathering around! Where now are the ships of Fingal? Here let us pass the hours of darkness; here wish for the moon of heaven."

The winds come down on the woods. The torrents rush from the rocks. Rain gathers round the head of Cromla. The red stars tremble between the flying clouds. Sad, by the side of a stream whose sound is echoed by a tree, sad by the side of a stream the chief of Erin sits. Connal son of Colgar is there, and Carril of other times. "Unhappy is the hand of Cuthullin," said the son of Semo, "unhappy is the hand of Cuthullin, since he slew his friend! Ferda, son of Damman, I loved thee as myself!"

"How, Cuthullin, son of Semo! how fell the breaker of the shields? Well I remember," said Connal, "the son of the noble Damman. Tall and fair, he was like the rain-bow of heaven. Ferda, from Albion came, the chief of a hundred hills. In Muri's* hall he learned the sword, and won the friendship of Cuthullin. We moved to the chase together: one was our bed in the heath!

* A place in Ulster.

Deugala was the ſpouſe of Cairbar, chief of the plains of Ullin. She was covered with the light of beauty, but her heart was the houſe of pride. She loved that ſun-beam of youth, the ſon of noble Damman. "Cairbar," ſaid the white-armed Deugala, "give me half of the herd. No more I will remain in your halls. Divide the herd, dark Cairbar!" "Let Cuthullin," ſaid Cairbar, "divide my herd on the hill. His breaſt is the ſeat of juſtice. Depart, thou light of beauty!" I went and divided the herd. One ſnow-white bull remained. I gave that bull to Cairbar. The wrath of Deugala roſe!

"Son of Damman," begun the fair, "Cuthullin hath pained my ſoul. I muſt hear of his death, or Lubar's ſtream ſhall roll over me. My pale ghoſt ſhall wander near thee, and mourn the wound of my pride. Pour out the blood of Cuthullin, or pierce this heaving breaſt." "Deugala," ſaid the fair-haired youth, "how ſhall I ſlay the ſon of Semo? He is the friend of my ſecret thoughts. Shall I then lift the ſword?" She wept three days before the chief, on the fourth he ſaid he would fight. "I will fight my friend, Deugala! but may I fall by his ſword! Could I wander on the hill alone? Could I behold the grave of Cuthullin?" We fought on the plain of Muri. Our ſwords avoid a wound. They ſlide on the helmets of ſteel; or ſound on the ſlippery ſhields. Deugala was near with a ſmile, and ſaid to the ſon of Damman: "Thine arm is feeble,

feeble, ſun-beam of youth! Thy years are not ſtrong for ſteel. Yield to the ſon of Semo. He is a rock on Malmor."

The tear is in the eye of youth. He faultering ſaid to me: "Cuthullin, raiſe thy boſſy ſhield. Defend thee from the hand of thy friend. My ſoul is laden with grief: for I muſt ſlay the chief of men!" I ſighed as the wind in the cleft of a rock. I lifted high the edge of my ſteel. The ſun-beam of battle fell: the firſt of Cuthullin's friends! Unhappy is the hand of Cuthullin ſince the hero fell!

"Mournful is thy tale, ſon of the car," ſaid Carril of other times. "It ſends my ſoul back to the ages of old, to the days of other years. Often have I heard of Comal, who ſlew the friend he loved; yet victory attended his ſteel: the battle was conſumed in his preſence!"

Comal was a ſon of Albion; the chief of an hundred hills! His deer drunk of a thouſand ſtreams. A thouſand rocks replied to the voice of his dogs. His face was the mildneſs of youth. His hand the death of heroes. One was his love, and fair was ſhe! the daughter of mighty Conloch. She appeared like a ſun-beam among women. Her hair was the wing of the raven. Her dogs were taught to the chaſe. Her bow-ſtring ſounded on the winds. Her ſoul was fixed on Comal. Often met their eyes of love. Their courſe in the chaſe was one. Happy were their words in

 ſecret.

ſecret. But Grumal loved the maid, the dark chief of the gloomy Ardven. He watched her lone ſteps in the heath; the foe of unhappy Comal!

One day, tired of the chaſe, when the miſt had concealed their friends, Comal and the daughter of Conloch met, in the cave of Ronan. It was the wonted haunt of Comal. Its ſides were hung with his arms. A hundred ſhields of thongs were there; a hundred helms of ſounding ſteel. "Reſt here," he ſaid, "my love, Galbina: thou light of the cave of Ronan! A deer appears on Mora's brow. I go; but I will ſoon return." "I fear," ſhe ſaid, "dark Grumal my foe: he haunts the cave of Ronan! I will reſt among the arms; but ſoon return, my love."

He went to the deer of Mora. The daughter of Conloch would try his love. She clothed her fair ſides with his armour; ſhe ſtrode from the cave of Ronan! He thought it was his foe. His heart beat high. His colour changed, and darkneſs dimmed his eyes. He drew the bow. The arrow flew. Galbina fell in blood! He run with wildneſs in his ſteps: he called the daughter of Conloch. No anſwer in the lonely rock. Where art thou, O my love? He ſaw, at length, her heaving heart, beating around the arrow he threw. "O Conloch's daughter, is it thou?" He ſunk upon her breaſt! The hunters found the hapleſs pair; he afterwards walked the hill. But many and ſilent were his ſteps round the dark dwelling of his love.

love. The fleet of the ocean came. He fought, the ſtrangers fled. He ſearched for death along the field. But who could ſlay the mighty Comal! He threw away his dark-brown ſhield. An arrow found his manly breaſt. He ſleeps with his loved Galbina at the noiſe of the ſounding ſurge! Their green tombs are ſeen by the mariner, when he bounds on the waves of the north.

F I N G A L,

AN ANCIENT

E P I C P O E M.

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT to Book III.

Cuthullin, pleafed with the ftory of Carril, infifts with that bard for more of his fongs. He relates the actions of Fingal in Lochlin, and death of Agandecca the beautiful fifter of Swaran. He had fcarce finifhed when Calmar the fon of Matha, who had advifed the firft battle, came wounded from the field, and told them of Swaran's defign to furprife the remains of the Irifh army. He himfelf propofes to withftand fingly the whole force of the enemy, in a narrow pafs, till the Irifh fhould make good their retreat. Cuthullin, touched with the gallant propofal of Calmar, refolves to accompany him, and orders Carril to carry off the few that remained of the Irifh. Morning comes, Calmar dies of his wounds; and, the fhips of the Caledonians appearing, Swaran gives over the purfuit of the Irifh, and returns to oppofe Fingal's landing. Cuthullin, afhamed, after his defeat, to appear before Fingal, retires to the cave of Tura. Fingal engages the enemy, puts them to flight; but the coming on of night makes the victory not decifive. The king, who had obferved the gallant behaviour of his grandfon Ofcar, gives him advices concerning his conduct in peace and war. He recommends to him to place the example of his fathers before his eyes, as the beft model for his conduct; which introduces the epifode concerning Fainafollis, the daughter of the king of Craca, whom Fingal had taken under his protection, in his youth. Fillan and Ofcar are difpatched to obferve the motions of the enemy by night; Gaul the fon of Morni defires the command of the army, in the next battle; which Fingal promifes to give him. Some general reflections of the poet clofe the third day.

F I N G A L,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK III*.

"PLEASANT are the words of the ſong," ſaid Cuthullin! "lovely the tales of other times! They are like the calm dew of the morning on the hill of roes! when the ſun is faint on its ſide, and the lake is ſettled and blue in the vale. O Carril, raiſe again thy voice! let me hear the ſong of Selma: which was ſung in my halls of joy, when Fingal king of ſhields was there, and glowed at the deeds of his fathers."

* The ſecond night, ſince the opening of the poem, continues; and Cuthullin, Connal, and Carril ſtill ſit in the place deſcribed in the preceding book. The ſtory of Agandecca is introduced here with propriety, as great uſe is made of it in the courſe of the poem, and as it, in ſome meaſure, brings about the cataſtrophe.

"Fingal!

"Fingal! thou dweller of battle," ſaid Carril, "early were thy deeds in arms. Lochlin was conſumed in thy wrath, when thy youth ſtrove with the beauty of maids. They ſmiled at the fair-blooming face of the hero; but death was in his hands. He was ſtrong as the waters of Lora. His followers were the roar of a thouſand ſtreams. They took the king of Lochlin in war; they reſtored him to his ſhips. His big heart ſwelled with pride; the death of the youth was dark in his ſoul. For none ever, but Fingal, had overcome the ſtrength of the mighty Starno*. He ſat in the hall of his ſhells in Lochlin's woody land. He called the grey-haired Snivan, that often ſung round the circle † of Loda: when the ſtone of power heard his voice, and battle turned in the field of the valiant!"

"Go; grey-haired Snivan," Starno ſaid, "go to Ardven's ſea-ſurrounded rocks. Tell to the king of Selma; he the faireſt among his thouſands, tell him I give him my daughter, the lovelieſt maid that ever heaved a breaſt of ſnow. Her arms are white as the foam of my waves. Her ſoul is generous and mild. Let him come with his braveſt heroes, to the daughter of the ſecret hall!" Snivan came to

* Starno was the father of Swaran as well as Agandecca. His fierce and cruel character is well marked in other poems concerning the times.

† This paſſage moſt certainly alludes to the religion of Lochlin, and *the ſtone of power* here mentioned is the image of one of the deities of Scandinavia.

Selma's hall: fair-haired Fingal attended his ſteps. His kindled ſoul flew to the maid, as he bounded on the waves of the north. "Welcome," ſaid the dark-brown Starno, "welcome, king of rocky Morven: welcome his heroes of might, ſons of the diſtant iſle! Three days within my halls ſhall ye feaſt! three days purſue my boars; that your fame may reach the maid who dwells in the ſecret hall."

Starno deſigned their death. He gave the feaſt of ſhells. Fingal, who doubted the foe, kept on his arms of ſteel. The ſons of death were afraid: they fled from the eyes of the king. The voice of ſprightly mirth aroſe. The trembling harps of joy were ſtrung. Bards ſung the battle of heroes: they ſung the heaving breaſt of love. Ullin, Fingal's bard, was there: the ſweet voice of reſounding Cona. He praiſed the daughter of Lochlin; and Morven's * high-deſcended chief. The daughter of Lochlin overheard. She left the hall of her ſecret ſigh! She came in all her beauty, like the moon from the cloud of the eaſt. Lovelineſs was around her as light. Her ſteps were the muſic of ſongs. She ſaw the youth and loved him. He was the ſtolen ſigh of her ſoul. Her blue eye rolled on him in ſecret: ſhe bleſt the chief of reſounding Morven.

* All the North-weſt coaſt of Scotland probably went of old under the name of Morven, which ſignifies a ridge of very high hills.

The third day, with all its beams, ſhone bright on the wood of boars. Forth moved the dark-brown Starno; and Fingal, king of ſhields. Half the day they ſpent in the chaſe; the ſpear of Selma was red in blood. It was then the daughter of Starno, with blue eyes rolling in tears: it was then ſhe came with her voice of love, and ſpoke to the king of Morven. "Fingal, high-deſcended chief, truſt not Starno's heart of pride. Within that wood he has placed his chiefs. Beware of the wood of death. But, remember, ſon of the iſle, remember Agandecca: ſave me from the wrath of my father, king of the windy Morven!"

The youth, with unconcern, went on; his heroes by his ſide. The ſons of death fell by his hand: and Gormal echoed around! Before the halls of Starno the ſons of the chaſe convened. The king's dark brows were like clouds; his eyes like meteors of night. "Bring hither," he ſaid, "Agandecca to her lovely king of Morven! His hand is ſtained with the blood of my people; her words have not been in vain!" She came with the red eye of tears. She came with looſely flowing locks. Her white breaſt heaved with broken ſighs, like the foam of the ſtreamy Lubar. Starno pierced her ſide with ſteel. She fell, like a wreath of ſnow, which ſlides from the rocks of Ronan; when the woods are ſtill, and echo deepens in the vale! Then Fingal eyed his valiant chiefs, his valiant chiefs took

 arms.

arms. The gloom of battle roared; Lochlin fled or died. Pale, in his bounding ſhip he cloſed the maid of the ſofteſt ſoul. Her tomb aſcends on Ardven; the ſea roars round her narrow dwelling.

"Bleſſed be her ſoul," ſaid Cuthullin; "bleſſed be the mouth of the ſong! Strong was the youth of Fingal; ſtrong is his arm of age. Lochlin ſhall fall again before king of echoing Morven. Shew thy face from a cloud, O moon! light his white ſails on the wave: and if any ſtrong ſpirit * of heaven ſits on that low-hung cloud; turn his dark ſhips from the rock, thou rider of the ſtorm!"

Such were the words of Cuthullin at the ſound of the mountain-ſtream; when Calmar aſcended the hill, the wounded ſon of Matha. From the field he came in his blood. He leaned on his bending ſpear. Feeble is the arm of battle! but ſtrong the ſoul of the hero! "Welcome! O ſon of Matha," ſaid Connal, "welcome art thou to thy friends! Why burſts that broken ſigh, from the breaſt of him who never feared before? And never, Connal, will he fear, chief of the pointed ſteel! My ſoul brightens in danger: in the noiſe of

* This is the only paſſage in the poem that has the appearance of religion. But Cuthullin's apoſtrophe to this ſpirit is accompanied with a doubt, ſo that it is not eaſy to determine whether the hero meant a ſuperior being, or the ghoſts of deceaſed warriors, who were ſuppoſed in thoſe times to rule the ſtorms, and to tranſport themſelves in a guſt of wind from one country to another.

arms. I am of the race of battle. My fathers never feared."

"Cormar was the firſt of my race. He ſported through the ſtorms of waves. His black ſkiff bounded on ocean; he travelled on the wings of the wind. A ſpirit once embroiled the night. Seas ſwell, and rocks reſound. Winds drive along the clouds. The lightning flies on wings of fire. He feared, and came to land: then bluſhed that he feared at all. He ruſhed again among the waves to find the ſon of the wind. Three youths guide the bounding bark; he ſtood with ſword unſheathed. When the low-hung vapour paſſed, he took it by the curling head. He ſearched its dark womb with his ſteel. The ſon of the wind forſook the air. The moon and ſtars returned! Such was the boldneſs of my race. Calmar is like his fathers. Danger flies from the lifted ſword. They beſt ſucceed who dare!

"But now, ye ſons of green Erin, retire from Lena's bloody heath. Collect the ſad remnant of our friends, and join the ſword of Fingal. I heard the ſound of Lochlin's advancing arms! Calmar will remain and fight. My voice ſhall be ſuch, my friend s, as if thouſands were behind me. But, ſon of Semo, remember me. Remember Calmar's lifeleſs corſe. When Fingal ſhall have waſted the field, place me by ſome ſtone of remembrance, that future times may hear my fame; that the

the mother of Calmar may rejoice in my renown."

"No: ſon of Matha," ſaid Cuthullin, "I will never leave thee here. My joy is in unequal fight: my ſoul increaſes in danger: Connal, and Carril of other times, carry off the ſad ſons of Erin. When the battle is over, ſearch for us in this narrow way. For near this oak we ſhall fall, in the ſtream of the battle of thouſands!" "O Fithil's ſon, with flying ſpeed ruſh over the heath of Lena. Tell to Fingal that Erin is fallen. Bid the king of Morven come. O let him come, like the ſun in a ſtorm, to lighten, to reſtore the iſle!"

Morning is grey on Cromla. The ſons of the ſea aſcend. Calmar ſtood forth to meet them in the pride of his kindling ſoul. But pale was the face of the chief. He leaned on his father's ſpear. That ſpear which he brought from Lara, when the ſoul of his mother was ſad; the ſoul of the lonely Alcletha, waining in the ſorrow of years. But ſlowly now the hero falls, like a tree on the plain. Dark Cuthullin ſtands alone like a rock in a ſandy vale. The ſea comes with its waves, and roars on its hardened ſides. Its head is covered with foam; the hills are echoing around.

Now from the grey miſt of the ocean, the white-ſailed ſhips of Fingal appear. High is the grove of their maſts, as they nod, by turns, on the rolling wave. Swaran ſaw them from the hill. He returned from the ſons of Erin. As ebbs the reſounding ſea, through the hun-

 dred

dred iſles of Iniſtore; ſo loud, ſo vaſt, ſo immenſe return the ſons of Lochlin againſt the king. But bending, weeping, ſad, and ſlow, and dragging his long ſpear behind, Cuthullin ſunk in Cromla's wood, and mourned his fallen friends. He feared the face of Fingal, who was wont to greet him from the fields of renown!

"How many lie there of my heroes! the chief of Erin's race! they that were cheerful in the hall, when the ſound of the ſhells aroſe! No more ſhall I find their ſteps in the heath. No more ſhall I hear their voice in the chaſe. Pale, ſilent, low on bloody beds, are they who were my friends! O ſpirits of the lately dead, meet Cuthullin on his heath! Speak to him on the wind, when the ruſtling tree of Tura's cave reſounds. There, far remote, I ſhall lie unknown. No bard ſhall hear of me. No grey ſtone ſhall riſe to my renown. Mourn me with the dead, O Bragela! departed is my fame." Such were the words of Cuthullin, when he ſunk in the woods of Cromla!

Fingal, tall in his ſhip, ſtretched his bright lance before him. Terrible was the gleam of the ſteel: it was like the green meteor of death, ſetting in the heath of Malmor, when the traveller is alone, and the broad moon is darkened in heaven.

"The battle is paſt," ſaid the king. "I behold the blood of my friends. Sad is the heath of Lena! mournful the oaks of Cromla! The hunters have fallen in their ſtrength: the ſon

ſon of Semo is no more. Ryno and Fillan, my ſons, ſound the horn of Fingal. Aſcend that hill on the ſhore; call the children of the foe. Call them from the grave of Lamdarg, the chief of other times. Be your voice like that of your father, when he enters the battles of his ſtrength. I wait for the mighty ſtranger. I wait on Lena's ſhore for Swaran. Let him come with all his race; ſtrong in battle are the friends of the dead!"

Fair Ryno as lightning gleamed along: dark Fillan ruſhed like the ſhade of autumn. On Lena's heath their voice is heard. The ſons of ocean heard the horn of Fingal. As the roaring eddy of ocean returning from the kingdom of ſnows; ſo ſtrong, ſo dark, ſo ſudden came down the ſons of Lochlin. The king in their front appears, in the diſmal pride of his arms! Wrath burns on his dark-brown face: his eyes roll in the fire of his valour. Fingal beheld the ſon of Starno: he remembered Agandecca. For Swaran with the tears of youth had mourned his white-boſomed ſiſter. He ſent Ullin of ſongs to bid him to the feaſt of ſhells: for pleaſant on Fingal's ſoul returned the memory of the firſt of his loves!

Ullin came with aged ſteps, and ſpoke to Starno's ſon. "O thou that dwelleſt afar, ſurrounded like a rock, with thy waves! come to the feaſt of the king, and paſs the day in reſt. To-morrow let us fight, O Swaran, and break the echoing ſhields." "To day," ſaid

Starno's wrathful son, "we break the echoing shields: to-morrow my feast shall be spread; but Fingal shall lie on earth." "To-morrow let his feast be spread," said Fingal with a smile. "To-day, O my sons! we shall break the echoing shields. Ossian, stand thou near my arm. Gaul, lift thy terrible sword. Fergus, bend thy crooked yew. Throw, Fillan, thy lance through heaven. Lift your shields, like the darkened moon. Be your spears the meteors of death. Follow me in the path of my fame. Equal my deeds in battle."

As a hundred winds on Morven; as the streams of a hundred hills; as clouds fly successive over heaven; as the dark ocean assails the shore of the desert: so roaring, so vast, so terrible, the armies mixed on Lena's echoing heath. The groan of the people spread over the hills: it was like the thunder of night, when the cloud bursts on Cona; and a thousand ghosts shriek at once on the hollow wind. Fingal rushed on in his strength, terrible as the spirit of Trenmor; when, in a whirlwind, he comes to Morven, to see the children of his pride. The oaks resound on their mountains, and the rocks fall down before him. Dimly seen, as lightens the night, he strides largely from hill to hill. Bloody was the hand of my father, when he whirled the gleam of his sword. He remembers the battles of his youth. The field is wasted in his course!

Ryno went on like a pillar of fire. Dark is the brow of Gaul. Fergus rushed forward with

with feet of wind. Fillan like the miſt of the hill. Oſſian, like a rock, came down. I exulted in the ſtrength of the king. Many were the deaths of my arm! diſmal the gleam of my ſword! My locks were not then ſo grey; nor trembled my hands with age. My eyes were not cloſed in darkneſs; my feet failed not in the race!

Who can relate the deaths of the people? Who the deeds of mighty heroes? when Fingal, burning in his wrath, conſumed the ſons of Lochlin? Groans ſwelled on groans from hill to hill, till night had covered all. Pale, ſtaring like a herd of deer, the ſons of Lochlin convene on Lena. We ſat and heard the ſprightly harp, at Lubar's gentle ſtream. Fingal himſelf was next to the foe. He liſtened to the tales of his bards. His godlike race were in the ſong, the chiefs of other times. Attentive, leaning on his ſhield, the king of Morven ſat. The wind whiſtled through his locks; his thoughts are of the days of other years. Near him on his bending ſpear, my young, my valiant Oſcar ſtood. He admired the king of Morven: his deeds were ſwelling in his ſoul!

"Son of my ſon," begun the king, "O Oſcar, pride of youth! I ſaw the ſhining of thy ſword. I gloried in my race. Purſue the fame of our fathers; be thou what they have been, when Trenmor lived, the firſt of men, and Trathal the father of heroes! They fought the battle in their youth. They are the ſong of bards, O Oſcar! bend the ſtrong in arm: but

but ſpare the feeble hand. Be thou a ſtream of many tides againſt the foes of thy people; but like the gale, that moves the graſs, to thoſe who aſk thine aid. So Trenmor lived; ſuch Trathal was; and ſuch has Fingal been. My arm was the ſupport of the injured; the weak reſted behind the lightning of my ſteel.

" Oſcar! I was young like thee, when lovely Fainaſóllis came: that ſun-beam! that mild light of love! the daughter of * Craca's king! I then returned from Cona's heath, and few were in my train. A white-ſailed boat appeared far off; we ſaw it like a miſt, that rode on ocean's wind. It ſoon approached. We ſaw the fair. Her white breaſt heaved with ſighs. The wind was in her looſe dark hair: her roſy cheek had tears. " Daughter of beauty," calm I ſaid, " what ſigh is in thy breaſt? Can I, young as I am, defend thee, daughter of the ſea? My ſword is not unmatched in war, but dauntleſs is my heart."

" To thee I fly," with ſighs ſhe ſaid, " O prince of mighty men! To thee I fly, chief of the generous ſhells, ſupporter of the feeble hand! The king of Craca's echoing iſle owned me the ſun-beam of his race. Cromala's hills have heard the ſighs of love for unhappy Fainaſóllis! Sora's chief beheld me

* What the Craca here mentioned was, is not, at this diſtance of time, eaſy to determine. The moſt probable opinion is, that it was one of the Shetland iſles. There is a ſtory concerning a daughter of the king of Craca in the ſixth book.

fair;

fair; he loved the daughter of Craca. His ſword is a beam of light upon the warrior's ſide. But dark is his brow; and tempeſts are in his ſoul. I ſhun him, on the roaring ſea; but Sora's chief purſues."

"Reſt thou," I ſaid, "behind my ſhield; reſt in peace, thou beam of light! The gloomy chief of Sora will fly, if Fingal's arm is like his ſoul. In ſome lone cave I might conceal thee, daughter of the ſea! But Fingal never flies. Where the danger threatens, I rejoice in the ſtorm of ſpears." I ſaw the tears upon her cheek. I pitied Craca's fair. Now, like a dreadful wave afar, appeared the ſhip of ſtormy Borbar. His maſts high-bended over the ſea behind their ſheets of ſnow. White roll the waters on either ſide. The ſtrength of ocean ſounds. "Come thou," I ſaid, "from the roar of ocean, thou rider of the ſtorm! Partake the feaſt within my hall. It is the houſe of ſtrangers."

"The maid ſtood trembling by my ſide. He drew the bow. She fell. "Unerring is thy hand," I ſaid, "but feeble was the foe!" We fought, nor weak the ſtrife of death! He ſunk beneath my ſword. We laid them in two tombs of ſtone; the hapleſs lovers of youth! Such have I been in my youth, O Oſcar! be thou like the age of Fingal. Never ſearch thou for battle; nor ſhun it when it comes.

"Fillan and Oſcar of the dark-brown hair! ye, that are ſwift in the race! fly over the heath in my preſence. View the ſons of Loch-

lin,

lin. Far off I hear the noiſe of their feet, like diſtant ſounds in woods. Go: that they may not fly from my ſword, along the waves of the north. For many chiefs of Erin's race lie here on the dark bed of death. The children of war are low; the ſons of echoing Cromla."

The heroes flew like two dark clouds: two dark clouds that are the chariots of ghoſts; when air's dark children come forth to frighten hapleſs men. It was then that Gaul *, the ſon of Morni, ſtood like a rock in night. His ſpear is glittering to the ſtars; his voice like many ſtreams.

"Son of battle," cried the chief, "O Fingal, king of ſhells! let the bards of many ſongs ſooth Erin's friends to reſt. Fingal, ſheath thou thy ſword of death; and let thy people fight. We wither away without our fame; our king is the only breaker of ſhields! When morning riſes on our hills, behold, at a diſtance, our deeds. Let Lochlin feel the ſword of Morni's ſon; that bards may ſing of me. Such was the cuſtom heretofore of Fingal's noble race. Such was thine own, thou king of ſwords, in battles of the ſpear."

* Gaul, the ſon of Morni, was chief of a tribe that diſputed long the pre-eminence with Fingal himſelf. They were reduced at laſt to obedience, and Gaul, from an enemy, turned Fingal's beſt friend and greateſt hero. His character is ſomething like that of Ajax in the Iliad; a hero of more ſtrength than conduct in battle. He was very fond of military fame, and here he demands the next battle to himſelf. The poet, by an artifice, removes Fingal, that his return may be the more magnificent.

"O ſon

"O ſon of Morni," Fingal replied, "I glory in thy fame. Fight; but my ſpear ſhall be near, to aid thee in the midſt of danger. Raiſe, raiſe the voice, ye ſons of ſong! and lull me into reſt. Here will Fingal lie, amidſt the wind of night. And if thou, Agandecca, art near, among the children of thy land; if thou ſitteſt on a blaſt of wind, among the high-ſhrowded maſts of Lochlin; come to my dreams *, my fair one. Shew thy bright face to my ſoul."

Many a voice and many a harp, in tuneful ſounds aroſe. Of Fingal's noble deeds they ſung; of Fingal's noble race: and ſometimes, on the lovely ſound, was heard the name of Oſſian. I often fought, and often won, in battles of the ſpear. But blind and tearful, and forlorn I walk with little men! O Fingal, with thy race of war I now behold thee not! The wild roes feed on the green tomb of the mighty king of Morven! Bleſt be thy ſoul, thou king of ſwords, thou moſt renowned on the hills of Cona!

* The poet prepares us for the dream of Fingal in the next book.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK IV.

ARGUMENT to BOOK IV.

The action of the poem being suspended by night, Ossian takes that opportunity to relate his own actions at the lake of Lego, and his courtship of Everallin, who was the mother of Oscar, and had died some time before the expedition of Fingal into Ireland. Her ghost appears to him, and tells him that Oscar, who had been sent, the beginning of the night, to observe the enemy, was engaged with an advanced party, and almost overpowered. Ossian relieves his son; and an alarm is given to Fingal of the approach of Swaran. The king rises, calls his army together, and, as he had promised the preceding night, devolves the command on Gaul the son of Morni, while he himself, after charging his sons to behave gallantly and defend his people, retires to a hill, from whence he could have a view of the battle. The battle joins; the poet relates Oscar's great actions. But when Oscar, in conjunction with his father, conquered in one wing, Gaul, who was attacked by Swaran in person, was on the point of retreating in the other. Fingal sends Ullin his bard to encourage him with a war song, but notwithstanding Swaran prevails; and Gaul and his army are obliged to give way. Fingal, descending from the hill, rallies them again: Swaran desists from the pursuit, possesses himself of a rising ground, restores the ranks, and waits the approach of Fingal. The king, having encouraged his men, gives the necessary orders, and renews the battle. Cuthullin, who, with his friend Connal, and Carril his bard, had retired to the cave of Tura, hearing the noise, came to the brow of the hill, which overlooked the field of battle, where he saw Fingal engaged with the enemy. He, being hindered by Connal from joining Fingal, who was himself upon the point of obtaining a complete victory, sends Carril to congratulate that hero on his success.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK IV*.

WHO comes with her ſongs from the hill, like the bow of the ſhowery Lena? It is the maid of the voice of love! The white-armed daughter of Toſcar! Often haſt thou heard my ſong; often given the tear of beauty. Doſt thou come to the wars of thy people? to hear the actions of Oſcar? When ſhall I ceaſe

* Fingal being aſleep, and the action ſuſpended by night, the poet introduces the ſtory of his courtſhip of Everallin the daughter of Branno. The epiſode is neceſſary to clear up ſeveral paſſages that follow in the poem; at the ſame time that it naturally brings on the action of the book, which may be ſuppoſed to begin about the middle of the third night from the opening of the poem. This book, as many of Oſſian's other compoſitions, is addreſſed to the beautiful Malvina, the daughter of Toſcar. She appears to have been in love with Oſcar, and to have affected the company of the father after the death of the ſon.

to mourn, by the ſtreams of reſounding Cona? My years have paſſed away in battle. My age is darkened with grief!

"Daughter of the hand of ſnow! I was not ſo mournful and blind. I was not ſo dark and forlorn, when Everallin loved me! Everallin with the dark-brown hair, the white-boſomed daughter of Branno! A thouſand heroes ſought the maid, ſhe refuſed her love to a thouſand. The ſons of the ſword were deſpiſed: for graceful in her eyes was Oſſian! I went, in ſuit of the maid, to Lego's ſable ſurge. Twelve of my people were there, the ſons of ſtreamy Morven! We came to Branno, friend of ſtrangers! Branno of the ſounding mail! "From whence," he ſaid, "are the arms of ſteel? Not eaſy to win is the maid, who has denied the blue-eyed ſons of Erin! But bleſt be thou, O ſon of Fingal! Happy is the maid that waits thee! Though twelve daughters of beauty were mine, thine were the choice, thou ſon of fame!"

He opened the hall of the maid, the dark-haired Everallin. Joy kindled in our manly breaſts. We bleſt the maid of Branno. "Above us on the hill appeared the people of ſtately Cormac. Eight were the heroes of the chief. The heath flamed wide with their arms. There Colla; there Durra of wounds, there mighty Toſcar, and Tago, there Freſtal the victorious ſtood;' Dairo of the happy deeds: Dala the battle's bulwark in the narrow way! The ſword flamed in the hand of Cormac. Grace-

ful

ful was the look of the hero! Eight were the heroes of Oſſian. Ullin ſtormy ſon of war. Mullo of the generous deeds. The noble, the graceful Scelacha. Oglan, and Cerdal the wrathful. Dumariccan's brows of death! And why ſhould Ogar be the laſt; ſo wide renowned on the hills of Ardven?"

"Ogar met Dala the ſtrong, face to face, on the field of heroes. The battle of the chiefs was like wind, on ocean's foamy waves. The dagger is remembered by Ogar; the weapon which he loved. Nine times he drowned it in Dala's ſide. The ſtormy battle turned. Three times I broke on Cormac's ſhield: three times he broke his ſpear. But unhappy youth of love! I cut his head away. Five times I ſhook it by the lock. The friends of Cormac fled. Whoever would have told me, lovely maid, when then I ſtrove in battle; that blind, forſaken, and forlorn, I now ſhould paſs the night; firm ought his mail to have been; unmatched his arm in war!"

On * Lena's gloomy heath, the voice of muſic died away. The unconſtant blaſt blew hard. The high oak ſhook its leaves around. Of Everallin were my thoughts, when in all

* The poet returns to his ſubject. If one could fix the time of the year in which the action of the poem happened, from the ſcene deſcribed here, I ſhould be tempted to place it in autumn. The trees ſhed their leaves, and the winds are variable, both which circumſtances agree with that ſeaſon of the year.

the light of beauty ſhe came; her blue eyes rolling in tears. She ſtood on a cloud before my ſight, and ſpoke with feeble voice! "Riſe, Oſſian, riſe, and ſave my ſon; ſave Oſcar prince of men. Near the red oak of Lubar's ſtream, he fights with Lochlin's ſons." She ſunk into her cloud again. I covered me with ſteel. My ſpear ſupported my ſteps; my rattling armour rung. I hummed, as I was wont in danger, the ſongs of heroes of old. Like diſtant thunder Lochlin heard. They fled; my ſon purſued.

I called him like a diſtant ſtream. Oſcar return over Lena. "No further purſue the foe," I ſaid, "though Oſſian is behind thee." He came! and pleaſant to my ear was Oſcar's ſounding ſteel. "Why didſt thou ſtop my hand," he ſaid, "till death had covered all? For dark and dreadful by the ſtream they met thy ſon and Fillan! They watched the terrors of the night. Our ſwords have conquered ſome. But as the winds of night pour the ocean over the white ſands of Mora, ſo dark advance the ſons of Lochlin, over Lena's ruſtling heath! The ghoſts of night ſhriek afar: I have ſeen the meteors of death. Let me awake the king of Morven, he that ſmiles in danger! He that is like the ſun of heaven, riſing in a ſtorm!"

Fingal had ſtarted from a dream, and leaned on Trenmor's ſhield; the dark-brown ſhield of his fathers; which they had lifted of old in war. The hero had ſeen, in his reſt, the mournful

mournful form of Agandecca. She came from the way of the ocean. She ſlowly, lonely, moved over Lena. Her face was pale like the miſt of Cromla. Dark were the tears of her cheek. She often raiſed her dim hand from her robe: her robe which was of the clouds of the deſert: ſhe raiſed her dim hand over Fingal, and turned away her ſilent eyes! "Why weeps the daughter of Starno?" ſaid Fingal with a ſigh; "why is thy face ſo pale, fair wanderer of the clouds?" She departed on the wind of Lena. She left him in the midſt of the night. She mourned the ſons of her people, that were to fall by the hand of Fingal.

The hero ſtarted from reſt. Still he beheld her in his ſoul. The ſound of Oſcar's ſteps approached. The king ſaw the grey ſhield on his ſide: for the faint beam of the morning came over the waters of Ullin. "What do the foes in their fear?" ſaid the riſing king of Morven; "or fly they through ocean's foam, or wait they the battle of ſteel? But why ſhould Fingal aſk? I hear their voice on the early wind! Fly over Lena's heath: O Oſcar, awake our friends!"

The king ſtood by the ſtone of Lubar. Thrice he reared his terrible voice. The deer ſtarted from the fountains of Cromla. The rocks ſhook on all their hills. Like the noiſe of a hundred mountain-ſtreams, that burſt, and roar, and foam! like the clouds, that gather to a tempeſt on the blue face of the ſky! ſo met the ſons of the deſert, round the terrible voice

of Fingal. Pleaſant was the voice of the king of Morven to the warriors of his land. Often had he led them to battle; often returned with the ſpoils of the foe!

"Come to battle," ſaid the king, "ye children of echoing Selma! Come to the death of thouſands. Comhal's ſon will ſee the fight. My ſword ſhall wave on the hill the defence of my people in war. But never may you need it, warriors: while the ſon of Morni fights, the chief of mighty men! He ſhall lead my battle! that his fame may riſe in ſong! O ye ghoſts of heroes dead! ye riders of the ſtorm of Cromla! receive my falling people with joy, and bear them to your hills. And may the blaſt of Lena carry them over my ſeas, that they may come to my ſilent dreams, and delight my ſoul in reſt! Fillan and Oſcar, of the dark-brown hair! fair Ryno, with the pointed ſteel! advance with valour to the fight. Behold the ſon of Morni! Let your ſwords be like his in ſtrife: behold the deeds of his hands. Protect the friends of your father. Remember the chiefs of old. My children, I will ſee you yet, though here you ſhould fall in Erin. Soon ſhall our cold pale ghoſts meet in a cloud, on Cona's eddying winds!"

Now like a dark and ſtormy cloud, edged round with the red lightning of heaven; flying weſtward from the morning's beam, the king of Selma removed. Terrible is the light of his armour; two ſpears are in his hand. His grey hair falls on the wind. He often looks

looks back on the war. Three bards attend the ſon of fame, to bear his words to the chiefs. High on Cromla's ſide he ſat, waving the lightning of his ſword, and as he waved we moved.

Joy riſes in Oſcar's face. His cheek is red. His eye ſheds tears. The ſword is a beam of fire in his hand. He came, and, ſmiling, ſpoke to Oſſian. "O ruler of the fight of ſteel! my father, hear thy ſon! Retire with Morven's mighty chief. Give me the fame of Oſſian. If here I fall; O chief, remember that breaſt of ſnow, the lonely ſun-beam of my love, the white-handed daughter of Toſcar! For, with red cheek from the rock, bending over the ſtream, her ſoft hair flies about her boſom, as ſhe pours the ſigh for Oſcar. Tell her I am on my hills, a lightly-bounding ſon of the wind; tell her, that in a cloud, I may meet the lovely maid of Toſcar." Raiſe, Oſcar, rather raiſe my tomb. I will not yield the war to thee. The firſt and bloodieſt in the ſtrife, my arm ſhall teach thee how to fight. But, remember, my ſon, to place this ſword, this bow, the horn of my deer, within that dark and narrow houſe, whoſe mark is one grey ſtone! Oſcar, I have no love to leave to the care of my ſon. Everallin is no more, the lovely daughter of Branno!

Such were our words, when Gaul's loud voice came growing on the wind. He waved on high the ſword of his father. We ruſhed to death and wounds. As waves, white-bubbling over the deep, come ſwelling, roaring

on; as rocks of ooze meet roaring waves; ſo foes attacked and fought. Man met with man, and ſteel with ſteel. Shields ſound, and warriors fall. As a hundred hammers on the red ſon of the furnace, ſo roſe, ſo rung their ſwords!

Gaul ruſhed on, like a whirlwind in Ardven. The deſtruction of heroes is on his ſword. Swaran was like the fire of the deſert in the echoing heath of Gormal! How can I give to the ſong the death of many ſpears? My ſword roſe high, and flamed in the ſtrife of blood. Oſcar, terrible wert thou, my beſt, my greateſt ſon! I rejoiced in my ſecret ſoul, when his ſword flamed over the ſlain. They fled amain through Lena's heath. We purſued and ſlew. As ſtones that bound from rock to rock; as axes in echoing woods; as thunder rolls from hill to hill, in diſmal broken peals; ſo blow ſucceeded to blow, and death to death, from the hand of Oſcar and mine.

But Swaran cloſed round Morni's ſon, as the ſtrength of the tide of Iniſtore. The king half-roſe from his hill at the fight. He half-aſſumed the ſpear. "Go, Ullin, go, my aged bard," begun the king of Morven. "Remind the mighty Gaul of war. Remind him of his fathers. Support the yielding fight with ſong; for ſong enlivens war." Tall Ullin went, with ſtep of age, and ſpoke to the king of ſwords. "Son* of the chief of generous ſteeds!

* The cuſtom of encouraging men in battle with extempore rhymes, has been carried down almoſt to our own

ſteeds! high-bounding king of ſpears. Strong arm in every perilous toil. Hard heart that never yields. Chief of the pointed arms of death. Cut down the foe; let no white ſail bound round dark Iniſtore. Be thine arm like thunder, thine eyes like fire, thy heart of ſolid rock. Whirl round thy ſword as a meteor at night; lift thy ſhield like the flame of death. Son of the chief of generous ſteeds, cut down the foe. Deſtroy!" The hero's heart beat high. But Swaran came with battle. He cleft the ſhield of Gaul in twain. The ſons of Selma fled.

Fingal at once aroſe in arms. Thrice he reared his dreadful voice. Cromla anſwered around. The ſons of the deſert ſtood ſtill. They bent their bluſhing faces to earth, aſhamed at the preſence of the king. He came, like a cloud of rain in the day of the ſun, when ſlow it rolls on the hill, and fields expect the ſhower. Silence attends its ſlow progreſs aloft; but the tempeſt is ſoon to ariſe. Swaran beheld the terrible king of Morven. He ſtopped in the midſt of his courſe. Dark he leaned on his ſpear, rolling his red eyes around. Silent and tall he ſeemed as an oak on the banks of Lubar, which had its branches blaſted of old by the lightning of heaven. It bends over

own times. Several of theſe war ſongs are extant, but the moſt of them are only a group of epithets, without either beauty or harmony, utterly deſtitute of poetical merit.

the ſtream: the grey moſs whiſtles in the wind: ſo ſtood the king. Then ſlowly he retired to the riſing heath of Lena. His thouſands pour around the hero. Darkneſs gathers on the hill!

Fingal, like a beam from heaven, ſhone in the midſt of his people. His heroes gather around him. He ſends forth the voice of his power. "Raiſe my ſtandards on high; ſpread them on Lena's wind, like the flames of an hundred hills! Let them ſound on the winds of Erin, and remind us of the fight. Ye ſons of the roaring ſtreams, that pour from a thouſand hills, be near the king of Morven! attend to the words of his power! Gaul ſtrongeſt arm of death! O Oſcar, of the future fights! Connal, ſon of the blue ſhields of Sora! Dermid of the dark-brown hair! Oſſian king of many ſongs, be near your father's arm!" We reared the ſun-beam * of battle; the ſtandard of the king! Each hero exulted with joy, as, waving, it flew on the wind. It was ſtudded with gold above, as the blue wide ſhell of the nightly ſky. Each hero had his ſtandard too; and each his gloomy men!

"Behold," ſaid the king of generous ſhells, "how Lochlin divides on Lena! They ſtand like broken clouds on a hill; or an half conſumed grove of oaks; when we ſee the ſky through its branches, and the meteor paſſing behind!

* Fingal's ſtandard was diſtinguiſhed by the name of *ſun-beam*; probably on account of its bright colour, and its being ſtudded with gold. To begin a battle is expreſſed, in old compoſition, by *lifting of the ſun-beam.*

behind! Let every chief among the friends of Fingal take a dark troop of thoſe that frown ſo high: nor let a ſon of the echoing groves bound on the waves of Iniſtore!"

"Mine," ſaid Gaul, "be the ſeven chiefs, that came from Lano's lake." "Let Iniſtore's dark king," ſaid Oſcar, "come to the ſword of Oſſian's ſon." "To mine the king of Iniſcon," ſaid Connal, "heart of ſteel!" "Or Mudan's chief or I," ſaid brown-haired Dermid, "ſhall ſleep on clay-cold earth." My choice, though now ſo weak and dark, was Terman's battling king; I promiſed with my hand to win the hero's dark-brown ſhield. "Bleſt and victorious be my chiefs," ſaid Fingal of the mildeſt look. "Swaran, king of roaring waves, thou art the choice of Fingal!"

Now, like an hundred different winds, that pour through many vales; divided, dark the ſons of Selma advanced. Cromla echoed around! "How can I relate the deaths, when we cloſed in the ſtrife of arms! O daughter of Toſcar! bloody were our hands! The gloomy ranks of Lochlin fell, like the banks of the roaring Cona! Our arms were victorious on Lena: each chief fulfilled his promiſe! Beſide the murmur of Branno thou didſt often ſit, O maid! thy white boſom roſe frequent, like the down of the ſwan when ſlow ſhe ſwims on the lake, and ſidelong winds blow on her ruffled wing. Thou haſt ſeen the ſun retire, red and ſlow behind his cloud: night

night gathering round on the mountain, while the unfrequent blaſt roared in the narrow vales. At length the rain beats hard: thunder rolls in peals. Lightning glances on the rocks! Spirits ride on beams of fire! The ſtrength of the mountain-ſtreams comes roaring down the hills. Such was the noiſe of battle, maid of the arms of ſnow! Why, daughter of Toſcar, why that tear? The maids of Lochlin have cauſe to weep! The people of their country fell. Bloody were the blue ſwords of the race of my heroes! But I am ſad, forlorn, and blind: no more the companion of heroes! Give, lovely maid, to me thy tears. I have ſeen the tombs of all my friends!"

It was then, by Fingal's hand, a hero fell, to his grief! Grey-haired he rolled in the duſt. He lifted his faint eyes to the king: "And is it by me thou haſt fallen," ſaid the ſon of Comhal, "thou friend of Agandecca! I have ſeen thy tears for the maid of my love in the halls of the bloody Starno! Thou haſt been the foe of the foes of my love, and haſt thou fallen by my hand? Raiſe, Ullin, raiſe the grave of Mathon; and give his name to Agandecca's ſong. Dear to my ſoul haſt thou been, thou darkly-dwelling maid of Ardven!"

Cuthullin, from the cave of Cromla, heard the noiſe of the troubled war. He called to Connal chief of ſwords; to Carril of other times. The grey-haired heroes heard his voice. They took their pointed ſpears. They came, and

and ſaw the tide of battle, like ocean's crowded waves: when the dark wind blows from the deep, and rolls the billows through the ſandy vale! Cuthullin kindled at the ſight. Darkneſs gathered on his brow. His hand is on the ſword of his fathers: his red rolling eyes on the foe. He thrice attempted to ruſh to battle. He thrice was ſtopt by Connal. "Chief of the iſle of miſt," he ſaid, "Fingal ſubdues the foe. Seek not a part of the fame of the king; himſelf is like the ſtorm!"

"Then, Carril, go," replied the chief, "go, greet the king of Morven. When Lochlin falls away like a ſtream after rain: when the noiſe of the battle is paſt. Then be thy voice ſweet in his ear to praiſe the king of Selma! Give him the ſword of Caithbat. Cuthullin is not worthy to lift the arms of his fathers! Come, O ye ghoſts of the lonely Cromla! ye ſouls of chiefs that are no more! be near the ſteps of Cuthullin; talk to him in the cave of his grief. Never more ſhall I be renowned, among the mighty in the land. I am a beam that has ſhone; a miſt that has fled away: when the blaſt of the morning came, and brightened the ſhaggy ſide of the hill: Connal! talk of arms no more: departed is my fame. My ſighs ſhall be on Cromla's wind; till my footſteps ceaſe to be ſeen. And thou, white-boſomed Bragela, mourn over the fall of my fame: vanquiſhed, I will never return to thee, thou ſun-beam of my ſoul!"

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK V.

ARGUMENT to BOOK V.

Cuthullin and Connal ſtill remain on the hill. Fingal and Swaran meet; the combat is deſcribed. Swaran is overcome, bound, and delivered over as a priſoner to the care of Oſſian and Gaul the ſon of Morni; Fingal, his younger ſons, and Oſcar, ſtill purſue the enemy. The epiſode of Orla a chief of Lochlin, who was mortally wounded in the battle, is introduced. Fingal, touched with the death of Orla, orders the purſuit to be diſcontinued; and calling his ſons together, he is informed that Ryno, the youngeſt of them, was ſlain. He laments his death, hears the ſtory of Lamderg and Gelchoſſa, and returns towards the place where he had left Swaran. Carril, who had been ſent by Cuthullin to congratulate Fingal on his victory, comes in the mean time to Oſſian. The converſation of the two poets cloſes the action of the fourth day.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK V.

ON Cromla's refounding fide, Connal fpoke to the chief of the noble car. Why that gloom, fon of Semo? Our friends are the mighty in fight. Renowned art thou, O warrior! many were the deaths of thy fteel. Often has Bregala met, with blue-rolling eyes of joy: often has fhe met her hero, returning in the midft of the valiant; when his fword was red with flaughter: when his foes were filent in the fields of the tomb. Pleafant to her ears were thy bards, when thy deeds arofe in fong.

But behold the king of Morven! He moves, below, like a pillar of fire. His ftrength is like the ftream of Lubar, or the wind of the echoing Cromla; when the branchy forefts of night are torn from all their rocks! Happy

are thy people, O Fingal! thine arm ſhall finiſh their wars. Thou art the firſt in their dangers: the wiſeſt in the days of their peace. Thou ſpeakeſt, and thy thouſands obey: armies tremble at the ſound of thy ſteel. Happy are thy people, O Fingal! king of reſounding Selma! Who is that ſo dark and terrible coming in the thunder of his courſe? who but Starno's ſon to meet the king of Morven? Behold the battle of the chiefs! it is the ſtorm of the ocean, when two ſpirits meet far diſtant, and contend for the rolling of waves. The hunter hears the noiſe on his hill. He ſees the high billows advancing to Ardven's ſhore!

Such were the words of Connal, when the heroes met in fight. There was the clang of arms! there every blow, like the hundred hammers of the furnace! Terrible is the battle of the kings; dreadful the look of their eyes. Their dark-brown ſhields are cleft in twain. Their ſteel flies, broken, from their helms. They fling their weapons down. Each ruſhes to his hero's graſp: their ſinewy arms bend round each other: they turn from ſide to ſide, and ſtrain and ſtretch their large ſpreading limbs below. But when the pride of their ſtrength aroſe, they ſhook the hill with their heels. Rocks tumble from their places on high; the green-headed buſhes are overturned. At length the ſtrength of Swaran fell: the king of the groves is bound. Thus have I ſeen on Cona; but Cona I behold no more!

thus

thus have I ſeen two dark hills, removed from their place, by the ſtrength of the burſting ſtream. They turn from ſide to ſide in their fall; their tall oaks meet one another on high. Then they tumble together with all their rocks and trees. The ſtreams are turned by their ſide. The red ruin is ſeen afar.

"Sons of diſtant Morven," ſaid Fingal: "guard the king of Lochlin! He is ſtrong as his thouſand waves. His hand is taught to war. His race is of the times of old. Gaul, thou firſt of my heroes; Oſſian king of ſongs, attend. He is the friend of Agandecca; raiſe to joy his grief. But, Oſcar, Fillan, and Ryno, ye children of the race! purſue Lochlin over Lena! that no veſſel may hereafter bound, on the dark-rolling waves of Iniſtore!"

They flew ſudden acroſs the heath. He ſlowly moved, like a cloud of thunder, when the ſultry plain of ſummer is ſilent and dark! His ſword is before him as a ſun-beam; terrible as the ſtreaming meteor of night. He came toward a chief of Lochlin, He ſpoke to the ſon of the wave. "Who is that ſo dark and ſad, at the rock of the roaring ſtream? He cannot bound over its courſe: how ſtately is the chief! His boſſy ſhield is on his ſide; his ſpear, like the tree of the deſert! Youth of the dark-red hair, art thou of the foes of Fingal!"

"I am a ſon of Lochlin," he cries, "ſtrong is my arm in war. My ſpouſe is weeping at home. Orla ſhall never return!" "Or fights

or yields the hero?" ſaid Fingal of the noble deeds; "foes do not conquer in my preſence: my friends are renowned in the hall. Son of the wave, follow me, partake the feaſt of my ſhells: purſue the deer of my deſert: be thou the friend of Fingal." "No:" ſaid the hero, "I aſſiſt the feeble. My ſtrength is with the weak in arms. My ſword has been always unmatched, O warrior! let the king of Morven yield!" "I never yielded, Orla! Fingal never yielded to man. Draw thy ſword, and chuſe thy foe. Many are my heroes!"

"Does then the king refuſe the fight?" ſaid Orla of the dark-brown ſhield. "Fingal is a match for Orla: and he alone of all his race!" "But, king of Morven, if I ſhall fall; as one time the warrior muſt die; raiſe my tomb in the midſt: let it be the greateſt on Lena. Send, over the dark-blue wave, the ſword of Orla to the ſpouſe of his love; that ſhe may ſhew it to her ſon, with tears, to kindle his ſoul to war." "Son of the mournful tale," ſaid Fingal, "why doſt thou awaken my tears? One day the warriors muſt die, and the children ſee their uſeleſs arms in the hall. But, Orla, thy tomb ſhall riſe. Thy white-boſomed ſpouſe ſhall weep over thy ſword."

They fought on the heath of Lena. Feeble was the arm of Orla. The ſword of Fingal deſcended, and cleft his ſhield in twain. It fell and glittered on the ground, as the moon on the ruffled ſtream. "King of Morven," ſaid the hero, "lift thy ſword and pierce my breaſt.

breaſt. Wounded and faint from battle, my friends have left me here. The mournful tale ſhall come to my love, on the banks of the ſtreamy Lota; when ſhe is alone in the wood, and the ruſtling blaſt in the leaves!"

"No;" ſaid the king of Morven, "I will never wound thee, Orla. On the banks of Lota let her ſee thee, eſcaped from the hands of war. Let thy grey-haired father, who, perhaps, is blind with age: let him hear the ſound of thy voice, and brighten within his hall. With joy let the hero riſe, and ſearch for his ſon with his hands!" "But never will he find him, Fingal;" ſaid the youth of the ſtreamy Lota. "On Lena's heath I muſt die: foreign bards ſhall talk of me. My broad belt covers my wound of death. I give it to the wind!"

The dark blood poured from his ſide, he fell pale on the heath of Lena. Fingal bent over him as he dies, and called his younger chiefs. "Oſcar and Fillan, my ſons, raiſe high the memory of Orla. Here let the dark-haired hero reſt, far from the ſpouſe of his love. Here let him reſt in his narrow houſe, far from the ſound of Lota. The feeble will find his bow at home; but will not be able to bend it. His faithful dogs howl on his hills; his boars, which he uſed to purſue, rejoice. Fallen is the arm of battle! the mighty among the valiant is low! Exalt the voice, and blow the horn, ye ſons of the king of Morven! Let us go back to Swaran, to ſend the night

away on ſong. Fillan, Oſcar, and Ryno, fly over the heath of Lena. Where, Ryno, art thou, young ſon of fame? Thou art not wont to be the laſt to anſwer thy father's voice!"

"Ryno," ſaid Ullin firſt of bards, "is with the awful forms of his fathers. With Trathal king of ſhields; with Trenmor of mighty deeds. The youth is low, the youth is pale, he lies on Lena's heath!" "Fell the ſwifteſt in the race," ſaid the king, "the firſt to bend the bow? Thou ſcarce haſt been known to me! why did young Ryno fall? But ſleep thou ſoftly on Lena, Fingal ſhall ſoon behold thee. Soon ſhall my voice be heard no more, and my footſteps ceaſe to be ſeen. The bards will tell of Fingal's name. The ſtones will talk of me. But, Ryno, thou art low indeed! thou haſt not received thy fame. Ullin, ſtrike the harp for Ryno; tell what the chief would have been. Farewell, thou firſt in every field! No more ſhall I direct thy dart! Thou that haſt been ſo fair! I behold thee not. Farewell." The tear is on the cheek of the king, for terrible was his ſon in war. His ſon! that was like a beam of fire by night on a hill; when the foreſts ſink down in its courſe, and the traveller trembles at the ſound! But the winds drive it beyond the ſteep. It ſinks from ſight, and darkneſs prevails.

"Whoſe fame is in that dark-green tomb?" begun the king of generous ſhells; four ſtones with their heads of moſs ſtand there! They mark

mark the narrow houſe of death. Near it let Ryno reſt. A neighbour to the brave let him lie. Some chief of fame is here, to fly, with my ſon, on clouds. O Ullin! raiſe the ſongs of old. Awake their memory in their tomb. If in the field they never fled, my ſon ſhall reſt by their ſide. He ſhall reſt, far diſtant from Morven, on Lena's reſounding plains!"

"Here," ſaid the bard of ſong, "here reſt the firſt of heroes. Silent is Lamderg* in this place: dumb is Ullin king of ſwords: And who, ſoft ſmiling from her cloud, ſhews me her face of love? Why, daughter, why ſo pale art thou, firſt of the maids of Cromla? Doſt thou ſleep with the foes in battle, white-boſomed daughter of Tuathal? Thou haſt been the love of thouſands, but Lamderg was thy love. He came to Tura's moſſy towers, and, ſtriking his dark buckler, ſpoke: "Where is Gelchoſſa, my love, the daughter of the noble Tuathal? I left her in the hall of Tura, when I fought with great Ulfada. Return ſoon, O Lamderg! ſhe ſaid, for here I ſit in grief. Her white breaſt roſe with ſighs. Her cheek was wet with tears. But I ſee her not coming to meet me; to ſooth my ſoul after war. Silent is the hall of my joy! I hear not the voice of the bard. Bran † does not ſhake his chains

* Lamh-dhearg ſignifies *bloody hand*. Gelchoſſa, *white legged*. Tuathal, *ſurly*. Ulfadda, *long beard*. Ferchios, *the conqueror of men*.

† Bran is a common name of grey-hounds to this day. It is a cuſtom in the north of Scotland, to give the names of

chains at the gate, glad at the coming of Lamderg. Where is Gelchoſſa, my love, the mild daughter of the generous Tuathal?"

"Lamderg!" ſays Ferchios, ſon of Aidon, "Gelchoſſa moves ſtately on Cromla. She and the maids of the bow purſue the flying deer!" "Ferchios!" replied the chief of Cromla, "no noiſe meets the ear of Lamderg! No ſound is in the woods of Lena. No deer fly in my ſight. No panting dog purſues. I ſee not Gelchoſſa my love, fair as the full moon ſetting on the hills. Go, Ferchios, go to Allad*, the grey-haired ſon of the rock. His dwelling is in the circle of ſtones. He may know of the bright Gelchoſſa!"

The ſon of Aidon went. He ſpoke to the ear of age. "Allad! dweller of rocks: thou that trembleſt alone! what ſaw thine eyes of age?" "I ſaw," anſwered Allad the old, "Ullin the ſon of Cairbar. He came, in darkneſs, from Cromla. He hummed a ſurly ſong, like a blaſt in a leafleſs wood. He entered

of the heroes mentioned in this poem, to their dogs; a proof that they are familiar to the ear, and their fame generally known.

* Allad is a druid: he is called the ſon of the rock, from his dwelling in a cave; and the circle of ſtones here mentioned is the pale of the druidical temple. He is here conſulted as one who had a ſupernatural knowledge of things; from the druids, no doubt, came the ridiculous notion of the ſecond ſight, which prevailed in the highlands and iſles.

the

the hall of Tura. " Lamderg," he ſaid, " moſt dreadful of men, fight, or yield to Ullin." " Lamderg," replied Gelchoſſa, " the ſon of battle, is not here. He fights Ulfada, mighty chief. He is not here, thou firſt of men! But Lamderg never yields. He will fight the ſon of Cairbar!" " Lovely art thou," ſaid terrible Ullin, " daughter of the generous Tuathal. I carry thee to Cairbar's halls. The valiant ſhall have Gelchoſſa. Three days I remain on Cromla, to wait that ſon of battle, Lamderg. On the fourth Gelchoſſa is mine; if the mighty Lamderg flies."

" Allad!" ſaid the chief of Cromla, " peace to thy dreams in the cave. Ferchios, ſound the horn of Lamderg, that Ullin may hear in his halls." Lamderg, like a roaring ſtorm, aſcended the hill from Tura. He hummed a ſurly ſong as he went, like the noiſe of a falling ſtream. He darkly ſtood upon the hill, like a cloud varying its form to the wind. He rolled a ſtone, the ſign of war. Ullin heard in Cairbar's hall. The hero heard, with joy, his foe. He took his father's ſpear. A ſmile brightens his dark-brown cheek, as he places his ſword by his ſide. The dagger glittered in his hand. He whiſtled as he went.

Gelchoſſa ſaw the ſilent chief, as a wreath of miſt aſcending the hill. She ſtruck her white and heaving breaſt; and ſilent, tearful, feared for Lamderg. " Cairbar, hoary chief of ſhells," ſaid the maid of the tender hand, " I muſt bend the bow on Cromla. I ſee the dark-

brown

brown hinds!" She hafted up the hill. In vain! the gloomy heroes fought. Why fhould I tell to Selma's king, how wrathful heroes fight? Fierce Ullin fell. Young Lamderg came, all pale, to the daughter of generous Tuathal! "What blood, my love?" fhe trembling faid: "what blood runs down my warriors' fide?" "It is Ullin's blood," the chief replied, "thou fairer than the fnow! Gelchoffa, let me reft here a little while." The mighty Lamderg died! "And fleepeft thou fo foon on earth, O chief of fhady Tura?" Three days fhe mourned befide her love. The hunters found her cold. They raifed this tomb above the three. Thy fon, O king of Morven, may reft here with heroes!

"And here my fon fhall reft," faid Fingal. "The voice of their fame is in mine ears. Fillan and Fergus! bring hither Orla; the pale youth of the ftream of Lota! Not unequalled fhall Ryno lie in earth, when Orla is by his fide. Weep, ye daughters of Morven! ye maids of the ftreamy Lota weep! Like a tree they grew on the hills. They have fallen like the oak of the defert; when it lies acrofs a ftream, and withers in the wind. Ofcar! chief of every youth! thou feeft how they have fallen. Be thou like them, on earth renowned. Like them the fong of bards. Terrible were their forms in battle; but calm was Ryno in the days of peace. He was like the bow of the fhower feen far diftant on the ftream; when the fun is fetting on Mora; when filence

dwells

dwells on the hill of deer. Reſt, youngeſt of my ſons! reſt, O Ryno! on Lena. We too ſhall be no more. Warriors one day muſt fall!"

Such was thy grief, thou king of ſwords, when Ryno lay on earth. What muſt the grief of Oſſian be, for thou thyſelf art gone! I hear not thy diſtant voice on Cona. My eyes perceive thee not. Often forlorn and dark I ſit at thy tomb; and feel it with my hands. When I think I hear thy voice, it is but the paſſing blaſt. Fingal has long ſince fallen aſleep, the ruler of the war!

Then Gaul and Oſſian ſat with Swaran, on the ſoft green banks of Lubar. I touched the harp to pleaſe the king. But gloomy was his brow. He rolled his red eyes towards Lena. The hero mourned his hoſt. I raiſed mine eyes to Cromla's brow. I ſaw the ſon of generous Semo. Sad and ſlow, he retired, from his hill, towards the lonely cave of Tura. He ſaw Fingal victorious, and mixed his joy with grief. The ſun is bright on his armour. Connal ſlowly ſtrode behind. They ſunk behind the hill, like two pillars of the fire of night: when winds purſue them over the mountain, and the flaming heath reſounds! Beſide a ſtream of roaring foam his cave is in a rock. One tree bends above it. The ruſhing winds echo againſt its ſides. Here reſts the chief of Erin, the ſon of generous Semo. His thoughts are on the battles he loſt. The tear is on his cheek. He mourned the departure of his fame, that fled like the miſt of Cona. O Bragela! thou art too far remote, to cheer the

ſoul

ſoul of the hero. But let him ſee thy bright form in his mind: that his thoughts may return to the lonely ſun-beam of his love!

Who comes with the locks of age? It is the ſon of ſongs. "Hail, Carril of other times! Thy voice is like the harp in the halls of Tura. Thy words are pleaſant as the ſhower which falls on the ſunny field. Carril of the times of old, why comeſt thou from the ſon of the generous Semo?"

"Oſſian, king of ſwords," replied the bard, "thou beſt can raiſe the ſong. Long haſt thou been known to Carril, thou ruler of war! Often have I touched the harp to lovely Everallin. Thou too haſt often joined my voice, in Branno's hall of generous ſhells. And often, amidſt our voices, was heard the mildeſt Everallin. One day ſhe ſung of Cormac's fall, the youth who died for her love. I ſaw the tears on her cheek, and on thine, thou chief of men. Her ſoul was touched for the unhappy, though ſhe loved him not. How fair among a thouſand maids was the daughter of generous Branno!"

"Bring not, Carril," I replied, "bring not her memory to my mind. My ſoul muſt melt at the remembrance. My eyes muſt have their tears. Pale in the earth is ſhe, the ſoftly-bluſhing fair of my love! But ſit thou on the heath, O bard! and let us hear thy voice. It is pleaſant as the gale of ſpring, that ſighs on the hunter's ear; when he awakens from dreams of joy, and has heard the muſic of the ſpirits of the hill!"

F I N G A L,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

BOOK VI.

ARGUMENT to BOOK VI.

Night comes on. Fingal gives a feaſt to his army, at which Swaran is preſent. The king commands Ullin his bard to give *the ſong of peace*; a cuſtom always obſerved at the end of a war. Ullin relates the actions of Trenmor, great grandfather to Fingal, in Scandinavia, and his marriage with Inibaca, the daughter of a king of Lochlin who was anceſtor to Swaran; which conſideration, together with his being brother to Agandecca, with whom Fingal was in love in his youth, induced the king to releaſe him, and permit him to return with the remains of his army, into Lochlin, upon his promiſe of never returning to Ireland, in a hoſtile manner. The night is ſpent in ſettling Swaran's departure, in ſongs of bards, and in a converſation in which the ſtory of Grumal is introduced by Fingal. Morning comes. Swaran departs; Fingal goes on a hunting party, and finding Cuthullin in the cave of Tura, comforts him, and ſets ſail, the next day, for Scotland; which concludes the poem.

FINGAL,

AN ANCIENT

EPIC POEM.

In SIX BOOKS.

BOOK VI.

THE clouds of night come rolling down. Darkneſs reſts on the ſteeps of Cromla. The ſtars of the north ariſe over the rolling of Erin's waves: they ſhew their heads of fire, through the flying miſt of heaven. A diſtant wind roars in the wood. Silent and dark is the plain of death! Still on the duſky Lena aroſe in my ears the voice of Carril. He ſung of the friends of our youth; the days of former years; when we met on the banks of Lego: when we ſent round the joy of the ſhell. Cromla anſwered to his voice. The ghoſts of thoſe he ſung came in their ruſtling winds. They were ſeen to bend with joy, towards the ſound of their praiſe!

Be thy ſoul bleſt, O Carril! in the midſt of thy eddying winds. O that thou wouldſt

come to my hall, when I am alone by night! And thou doſt come, my friend. I hear often thy light hand on my harp; when it hangs, on the diſtant wall, and the feeble ſound touches my ear. Why doſt thou not ſpeak to me in my grief, and tell when I ſhall behold my friends? But thou paſſeſt away in thy murmuring blaſt; the wind whiſtles through the grey hair of Oſſian!

Now, on the ſide of Mora, the heroes gathered to the feaſt. A thouſand aged oaks are burning to the wind. The ſtrength * of the ſhells goes round. The ſouls of warriors brighten with joy. But the king of Lochlin is ſilent. Sorrow reddens in the eyes of his pride. He often turned toward Lena. He remembered that he fell. Fingal leaned on the ſhield of his fathers. His grey locks ſlowly waved on the wind, and glittered to the beam of night. He ſaw the grief of Swaran, and ſpoke to the firſt of bards.

" Raiſe, Ullin, raiſe the ſong of peace. O ſooth my ſoul from war! Let mine ear forget, in the ſound, the diſmal noiſe of arms. Let a hundred harps be near to gladden the king of Lochlin. He muſt depart from us

* The ancient Celtæ brewed beer, and they were no ſtrangers to mead. Several ancient poems mention wax lights and wine as common in the halls of Fingal. The Caledonians, in their frequent incurſions to the province, might become acquainted with thoſe conveniences of life, and introduce them into their own country, among the booty which they carried from South Britain.

with joy. None ever went ſad from Fingal. Oſcar! the lightning of my ſword is againſt the ſtrong in fight. Peaceful it lies by my ſide when warriors yield in war."

"Trenmor*," ſaid the mouth of ſongs, "lived in the days of other years. He bounded over the waves of the north: companion of the ſtorm! The high rocks of the land of Lochlin; its groves of murmuring ſounds appeared to the hero through miſt; he bound his white-boſomed ſails. Trenmor purſued the boar, that roared through the woods of Gormal. Many had fled from its preſence: but it rolled in death on the ſpear of Trenmor. Three chiefs, who beheld the deed, told of the mighty ſtranger. They told that he ſtood, like a pillar of fire, in the bright arms of his valour. The king of Lochlin prepared the feaſt. He called the blooming Trenmor. Three days he feaſted at Gormal's windy towers; and received his choice in the combat. The land of Lochlin had no hero, that yielded not to Trenmor. The ſhell of joy went round with ſongs, in praiſe of the king of Morven. He that came over the waves, the firſt of mighty men!"

Now when the fourth grey morn aroſe, the hero launched his ſhip. He walked along the ſilent ſhore, and called for the ruſhing wind: for loud and diſtant he heard the blaſt mur-

* Trenmor was great grandfather to Fingal. The ſtory is introduced to facilitate the diſmiſſion of Swaran.

muring behind the groves. Covered over with arms of ſteel, a ſon of the woody Gormal appeared. Red was his cheek and fair his hair. His ſkin like the ſnow of Morven. Mild rolled his blue and ſmiling eye, when he ſpoke to the king of ſwords.

"Stay, Trenmor, ſtay, thou firſt of men, thou haſt not conquered Lonval's ſon. My ſword has often met the brave. The wiſe ſhun the ſtrength of my bow." "Thou fair-haired youth," Trenmor replied, "I will not fight with Lonval's ſon. Thine arm is feeble, ſun-beam of youth! Retire to Gormal's dark-brown hinds." "But I will retire," replied the youth, "with the ſword of Trenmor; and exult in the ſound of my fame. The virgins ſhall gather with ſmiles, around him who conquered mighty Trenmor. They ſhall ſigh with the ſighs of love, and admire the length of thy ſpear; when I ſhall carry it among thouſands; when I lift the glittering point to the ſun."

"Thou ſhalt never carry my ſpear," ſaid the angry king of Morven. "Thy mother ſhall find thee pale on the ſhore; and, looking over the dark-blue deep, ſee the ſails of him that ſlew her ſon!" "I will not lift the ſpear," replied the youth, "my arm is not ſtrong with years. But, with the feathered dart, I have learned to pierce a diſtant foe. Throw down that heavy mail of ſteel. Trenmor is covered from death. I, firſt, will lay my mail on earth. Throw now thy dart, thou king of Morven!"

He ſaw the heaving of her breaſt. It was the ſiſter of the king. She had ſeen him in the hall: and loved his face of youth. The ſpear dropt from the hand of Trenmor: he bent his red cheek to the ground. She was to him a beam of light that meets the ſons of the cave; when they reviſit the fields of the ſun, and bend their aching eyes!

"Chief of the windy Morven," begun the maid of the arms of ſnow, "let me reſt in thy bounding ſhip, far from the love of Corlo. For he, like the thunder of the deſert, is terrible to Inibaca. He loves me in the gloom of pride. He ſhakes ten thouſand ſpears!" "Reſt thou in peace," ſaid the mighty Trenmor, "reſt behind the ſhield of my fathers. I will not fly from the chief, though he ſhakes ten thouſand ſpears!" Three days he waited on the ſhore. He ſent his horn abroad. He called Corlo to battle, from all his echoing hills. But Corlo came not to battle. The king of Lochlin deſcends from his hall. He feaſted on the roaring ſhore. He gave the maid to Trenmor!

"King of Lochlin," ſaid Fingal, "thy blood flows in the veins of thy foe. Our fathers met in battle, becauſe they loved the ſtrife of ſpears. But often did they feaſt in the hall: and ſend round the joy of the ſhell. Let thy face brighten with gladneſs, and thine ear delight in the harp. Dreadful as the ſtorm of thine ocean, thou haſt poured thy valour forth; thy voice has been like the voice of

thousands when they engage in war. Raise, to-morrow, raise thy white sails to the wind, thou brother of Agandecca! Bright as the beam of noon, she comes on my mournful soul. I have seen thy tears for the fair one. I spared thee in the halls of Starno; when my sword was red with slaughter; when my eye was full of tears for the maid. Or dost thou chuse the fight? The combat which thy fathers gave to Trenmor is thine! that thou mayest depart renowned, like the sun setting in the west!"

"King of the race of Morven!" said the chief of resounding Lochlin, "never will Swaran fight with thee, first of a thousand heroes! I have seen thee in the halls of Starno: few were thy years beyond my own. When shall I, I said to my soul, lift the spear like the noble Fingal? We have fought heretofore, O warrior, on the side of the shaggy Malmor; after my waves had carried me to thy halls, and the feast of a thousand shells was spread. Let the bards send his name who overcame to future years, for noble was the strife of Malmor! But many of the ships of Lochlin have lost their youths on Lena. Take these, thou king of Morven, and be the friend of Swaran! When thy sons shall come to Gormal, the feast of shells shall be spread, and the combat offered on the vale."

"Nor ship," replied the king, "shall Fingal take, nor land of many hills. The desert is enough to me, with all its deer and woods.

Rise

Riſe on thy waves again, thou noble friend of Agandecca! Spread thy white ſails to the beam of the morning; return to the echoing hills of Gormal." "Bleſt be thy ſoul, thou king of ſhells," ſaid Swaran of the dark-brown ſhield. "In peace thou art the gale of ſpring. In war the mountain-ſtorm. Take now my hand in friendſhip, king of echoing Selma! Let thy bards mourn thoſe who fell. Let Erin give the ſons of Lochlin to earth. Raiſe high the moſſy ſtones of their fame: that the children of the north hereafter may behold the place where their fathers fought. The hunter may ſay, when he leans on a moſſy tomb, here Fingal and Swaran fought, the heroes of other years. Thus hereafter ſhall he ſay, and our fame ſhall laſt for ever!"

"Swaran," ſaid the king of hills, "today our fame is greateſt. We ſhall paſs away like a dream. No ſound will remain in our fields of war. Our tombs will be loſt in the heath. The hunter ſhall not know the place of our reſt. Our names may be heard in ſong. What avails it when our ſtrength had ceaſed? O Oſſian, Carril, and Ullin! you know of heroes that are no more. Give us the ſong of other years. Let the night paſs away on the ſound, and morning return with joy."

We gave the ſong to the kings. An hundred harps mixed their ſound with our voice. The face of Swaran brightened, like the full

moon of heaven; when the clouds vanish away, and leave her calm and broad in the midst of the sky!

"Where, Carril," said the great Fingal, "Carril of other times! Where is the son of Semo, the king of the isle of mist? Has he retired like the meteor of death, to the dreary cave of Tura?" "Cuthullin," said Carril of other times, "lies in the dreary cave of Tura. His hand is on the sword of his strength. His thoughts on the battles he lost. Mournful is the king of spears; till now unconquered in war. He sends his sword to rest on the side of Fingal: for, like the storm of the desert, thou hast scattered all his foes. Take, O Fingal! the sword of the hero. His fame is departed like mist, when it flies, before the rustling wind, along the brightening vale."

"No:" replied the king, "Fingal shall never take his sword. His arm is mighty in war: his fame shall never fail. Many have been overcome in battle; whose renown arose from their fall. O Swaran! king of resounding woods, give all thy grief away. The vanquished, if brave, are renowned. They are like the sun in a cloud, when he hides his face in the south, but looks again on the hills of grass!

"Grumal was a chief of Cona. He sought the battle on every coast. His soul rejoiced in blood; his ear in the din of arms. He poured his warriors on Craca; Craca's king met him from

from his grove: for then, within the circle of Brumo *, he ſpoke to the ſtone of power. Fierce was the battle of the heroes, for the maid of the breaſt of ſnow. The fame of the daughter of Craca had reached Grumal at the ſtreams of Cona: he vowed to have the white-boſomed maid, or die on echoing Craca. Three days they ſtrove together, and Grumal on the fourth was bound. Far from his friends they placed him in the horrid circle of Brumo; where often, they ſaid, the ghoſts of the dead howled round the ſtone of their fear. But he afterwards ſhone, like a pillar of the light of heaven. They fell by his mighty hand. Grumal had all his fame!"

"Raiſe, ye bards of other times," continued the great Fingal, "raiſe high the praiſe of heroes: that my ſoul may ſettle on their fame; that the mind of Swaran may ceaſe to be ſad." They lay in the heath of Mora. The dark winds ruſtled over the chiefs. A hundred voices, at once, aroſe: a hundred harps were ſtrung. They ſung of other times; the mighty chiefs of former years! When now ſhall I hear the bard? When rejoice at the fame of my fathers? The harp is not ſtrung on Morven. The voice of muſic aſcends not on Cona. Dead, with the mighty, is the bard. Fame is in the deſert no more.

Morning trembles with the beam of the eaſt; it glimmers on Cromla's ſide. Over

* This paſſage alludes to the religion of the king of Craca.

Lena is heard the horn of Swaran. The ſons of the ocean gather around. Silent and ſad they riſe on the wave. The blaſt of Erin is behind their ſails. White, as the miſt of Morven, they float along the ſea. "Call," ſaid Fingal, "call my dogs, the long-bounding ſons of the chaſe. Call white-breaſted Bran, and the ſurly ſtrength of Luath! Fillan, and Ryno; but he is not here! My ſon reſts on the bed of death. Fillan and Fergus! blow the horn, that the joy of the chaſe may ariſe: that the deer of Cromla may hear and ſtart at the lake of roes."

The ſhrill ſound ſpreads along the wood. The ſons of heathy Cromla ariſe. A thouſand dogs fly off at once, grey-bounding through the heath. A deer fell by every dog; three by the white-breaſted Bran. He brought them, in their flight, to Fingal, that the joy of the king might be great! One deer fell at the tomb of Ryno. The grief of Fingal returned. He ſaw how peaceful lay the ſtone of him, who was the firſt at the chaſe! "No more ſhalt thou riſe, O my ſon! to partake of the feaſt of Cromla. Soon will thy tomb be hid, and the graſs grow rank on thy grave. The ſons of the feeble ſhall paſs along. They ſhall not know where the mighty lie.

"Oſſian and Fillan, ſons of my ſtrength! Gaul, chief of the blue ſteel of war! let us aſcend the hill to the cave of Tura. Let us find the chief of the battles of Erin. Are theſe the walls of Tura? grey and lonely they

riſe

riſe on the heath. The chief of ſhells is ſad, and the halls are ſilent and lonely. Come, let us find Cuthullin, and give him all our joy. But is that Cuthullin, O Fillan, or a pillar of ſmoke on the heath? The wind of Cromla is on my eyes. I diſtinguiſh not my friend."

"Fingal!" replied the youth, "it is the ſon of Semo! Gloomy and ſad is the hero! his hand is on his ſword. Hail to the ſon of battle, breaker of the ſhields!" "Hail to thee," replied Cuthullin, "hail to all the ſons of Morven! Delightful is thy preſence, O Fingal! it is the ſun on Cromla; when the hunter mourns his abſence for a ſeaſon, and ſees him between the clouds. Thy ſons are like ſtars that attend thy courſe. They give light in the night. It is not thus thou haſt ſeen me, O Fingal! returning from the wars of thy land: when the kings of the world * had fled, and joy returned to the hill of hinds!" "Many are thy words, Cuthullin," ſaid Connan † of ſmall renown. "Thy words are many, ſon of Semo, but where are thy deeds in arms? Why did we come, over ocean, to aid thy feeble ſword? Thou flyeſt to thy cave of grief,

* This is the only paſſage in the poem wherein the wars of Fingal againſt the Romans are alluded to: the Roman emperor is diſtinguiſhed in old compoſition by the title of *king of the world.*

† Connan was of the family of Morni. He is mentioned in ſeveral other poems, and always appears with the ſame character. The poet paſſed him over in ſilence till now, and his behaviour here deſerves no better uſage.

and Connan fights thy battles. Resign to me these arms of light. Yield them, thou chief of Erin." "No hero," replied the chief, "ever sought the arms of Cuthullin! and had a thousand heroes sought them, it were in vain, thou gloomy youth! I fled not to the cave of grief, till Erin failed at her streams."

"Youth of the feeble arm," said Fingal, "Connan, cease thy words! Cuthullin is renowned in battle; terrible over the world. Often have I heard thy fame, thou stormy chief of Inis-fail. Spread now thy white sails for the isle of mist. See Bragela leaning on her rock. Her tender eye is in tears, the winds lift her long hair from her heaving breast. She listens to the breeze of night, to hear the voice of thy rowers *; to hear the song of the sea! the sound of thy distant harp!"

"Long shall she listen in vain. Cuthullin shall never return! How can I behold Bragela, to raise the sigh of her breast? Fingal, I was always victorious, in battles of other spears!" "And hereafter thou shalt be victorious," said Fingal of generous shells. "The fame of Cuthullin shall grow, like the branchy tree of Cromla. Many battles await thee, O chief! Many shall be the wounds of thy hand! Bring hither, Oscar, the deer! Pre-

* The practice of singing when they row is universal among the inhabitants of the north-west coast of Scotland and the isles. It deceives time, and inspirits the rowers.

pare

pare the feaſt of ſhells. Let our ſouls rejoice after danger, and our friends delight in our preſence!"

We ſat. We feaſted. We ſung. The ſoul of Cuthullin roſe. The ſtrength of his arm returned. Gladneſs brightened along his face. Ullin gave the ſong; Carril raiſed the voice. I joined the bards, and ſung of battles of the ſpear. Battles! where I often fought. Now I fight no more! The fame of my former deeds is ceaſed. I ſit forlorn at the tombs of my friends!

Thus the night paſſed away in ſong. We brought back the morning with joy. Fingal aroſe on the heath, and ſhook his glittering ſpear. He moved firſt toward the plains of Lena. We followed in all our arms.

" Spread the ſail," ſaid the king, " ſeize the winds as they pour from Lena." We roſe on the wave with ſongs. We ruſhed, with joy, through the foam of the deep.

LATHMON:

A

POEM.

ARGUMENT.

Lathmon, a Britiſh prince, taking advantage of Fingal's abſence on an expedition in Ireland, made a deſcent on Morven, and advanced within ſight of Selma, the royal reſidence. Fingal arrived in the mean time, and Lathmon retreated to a hill, where his army was ſurprized by night, and himſelf taken priſoner by Oſſian and Gaul the ſon of Morni. The poem opens, with the firſt appearance of Fingal on the coaſt of Morven, and ends, it may be ſuppoſed, about noon the next day.

LATHMON:

A

POEM.

SELMA, thy halls are ſilent. There is no ſound in the woods of Morven. The wave tumbles alone on the coaſt. The ſilent beam of the ſun is on the field. The daughters of Morven come forth, like the bow of the ſhower; they look towards green Erin for the white ſails of the king. He had promiſed to return, but the winds of the north aroſe!

Who pours from the eaſtern hill, like a ſtream of darkneſs? It is the hoſt of Lathmon. He has heard of the abſence of Fingal. He truſts in the wind of the north. His ſoul brightens with joy. Why doſt thou come, O Lathmon? The mighty are not in Selma. Why comeſt thou with thy forward ſpear? Will the daughters of Morven fight? But ſtop, O mighty ſtream, in thy courſe! Does not Lathmon behold theſe ſails? Why doſt thou vaniſh, Lathmon, like the miſt of the lake? But the ſqually ſtorm is behind thee; Fingal purſues thy ſteps!

The king of Morven had ſtarted from ſleep, as we rolled on the dark-blue wave. He ſtretched

ſtretched his hand to his ſpear, his heroes roſe around. We knew that he had ſeen his fathers, for they often deſcended to his dreams, when the ſword of the foe roſe over the land; and the battle darkened before us. "Whither haſt thou fled, O wind!" ſaid the king of Morven. "Doſt thou ruſtle in the chambers of the ſouth, purſueſt thou the ſhower in other lands? Why doſt thou not come to my ſails? to the blue face of my ſeas? The foe is in the land of Morven, and the king is abſent far. But let each bind on his mail, and each aſſume his ſhield. Stretch every ſpear over the wave; let every ſword be unſheathed. Lathmon * is before us with his hoſt: he that fled † from Fingal on the plains of Lona. But he returns, like a collected ſtream, and his roar is between our hills."

Such were the words of Fingal. We ruſhed into Carmona's bay. Oſſian aſcended the hill: he thrice ſtruck his boſſy ſhield. The rock of Morven replied: the bounding roes came forth. The foe was troubled in my preſence: he collected his darkened hoſt. I ſtood, like a cloud on the hill, rejoicing in the arms of my youth.

* It is ſaid by tradition, that it was the intelligence of Lathmon's invaſion, that occaſioned Fingal's return from Ireland; though Oſſian, more poetically, aſcribes the cauſe of Fingal's knowledge to his dream.

† He alludes to a battle wherein Fingal had defeated Lathmon.

Morni

Morni * ſat beneath a tree, at the roaring waters of Strumon †; his locks of age are grey: he leans forward on his ſtaff; young Gaul is near the hero, hearing the battles of his father. Often did he riſe, in the fire of his ſoul, at the mighty deeds of Morni. The aged heard the ſound of Oſſian's ſhield: he knew the ſign of war. He ſtarted at once from his place. His grey hair parted on his back. He remembered the deeds of other years.

"My ſon," he ſaid to fair-haired Gaul, "I hear the ſound of war. The king of Morven is returned, his ſignals are ſpread on the wind. Go to the halls of Strumon; bring his arms to Morni. Bring the ſhield of my father's latter years, for my arm begins to fail. Take thou thy armour, O Gaul! and ruſh to the firſt of thy battles. Let thine arm reach to the renown of thy fathers. Be thy courſe in the field, like the eagle's wing. Why ſhouldſt thou fear death, my ſon? the valiant fall with fame; their ſhields turn the dark ſtream of danger away; renown dwells on their aged hairs. Doſt thou not ſee, O Gaul! how the ſteps of my age are honoured? Morni moves forth,

* Morni was chief of a numerous tribe, in the days of Fingal, and his father Comhal. The laſt-mentioned hero was killed in battle againſt Morni's tribe; but the valour and conduct of Fingal reduced them, at laſt, to obedience. We find the two heroes perfectly reconciled in this poem.

† Stru'-moné, *ſtream of the hill.* Here the proper name of a rivulet in the neighbourhood of Selma.

and the young meet him, with awe, and turn their eyes, with ſilent joy, on his courſe. But I never fled from danger, my ſon! my ſword lightened through the darkneſs of war. The ſtranger melted before me; the mighty were blaſted in my preſence."

Gaul brought the arms to Morni: the aged warrior is covered with ſteel. He took the ſpear in his hand, which was ſtained with the blood of the valiant. He came towards Fingal, his ſon attended his ſteps. The ſon of Comhal aroſe before him with joy, when he came in his locks of age.

"Chief of roaring Strumon!" ſaid the riſing ſoul of Fingal; "do I behold thee in arms, after thy ſtrength has failed? Often has Morni ſhone in fight, like the beam of the aſcending ſun; when he diſperſes the ſtorms of the hill, and brings peace to the glittering fields. But why didſt thou not reſt in thine age? Thy renown is in the ſong. The people behold thee, and bleſs the departure of mighty Morni. Why didſt thou not reſt in thine age? The foe will vaniſh before Fingal!"

"Son of Comhal," replied the chief, "the ſtrength of Morni's arm has failed. I attempt to draw the ſword of my youth, but it remains in its place. I throw the ſpear, but it falls ſhort of the mark. I feel the weight of my ſhield. We decay like the graſs of the hill: our ſtrength returns no more. I have a ſon, O Fingal! his ſoul has delighted in Morni's deeds;

deeds; but his ſword has not been lifted againſt a foe, neither has his fame begun. I come with him to war; to direct his arm in fight. His renown will be a light to my ſoul, in the dark hour of my departure. O that the name of Morni were forgot among the people! that the heroes would only ſay, "Behold the father of Gaul!"

"King of Strumon," Fingal replied, "Gaul ſhall lift the ſword in fight. But he ſhall lift it before Fingal; my arm ſhall defend his youth. But reſt thou in the halls of Selma; and hear of our renown. Bid the harp to be ſtrung, and the voice of the bard to ariſe, that thoſe who fall may rejoice in their fame; and the ſoul of Morni brighten with joy. Oſſian! thou haſt fought in battles: the blood of ſtrangers is on thy ſpear: thy courſe be with Gaul, in the ſtrife; but depart not from the ſide of Fingal! leſt the foe ſhould find you alone, and your fame fail in my preſence.

"I ſaw * Gaul in his arms; my ſoul was mixed with his. The fire of the battle was in his eyes! he looked to the foe with joy. We ſpoke the words of friendſhip in ſecret; the lightning of our ſwords poured together; for we drew them behind the wood, and tried the ſtrength of our arms on the empty air."

* Oſſian ſpeaks. The contraſt between the old and young heroes is ſtrongly marked. The circumſtance of the latter's drawing their ſwords is well imagined, and agrees with the impatience of young ſoldiers juſt entered upon action.

Night came down on Morven. Fingal ſat at the beam of the oak. Morni ſat by his ſide with all his grey waving locks. Their words were of other times, of the mighty deeds of their fathers. Three bards, at times, touched the harp: Ullin was near with his ſong. He ſung of the mighty Comhal; but * darkneſs gathered on Morni's brow. He rolled his red eye on Ullin: at once ceaſed the ſong of the bard. Fingal obſerved the aged hero, and he mildly ſpoke. "Chief of Strumon, why that darkneſs? Let the days of other years be forgot. Our fathers contended in war; but we meet together, at the feaſt. Our ſwords are turned on the foe of our land: he melts before us on the field. Let the days of our fathers be forgot, hero of moſſy Strumon!"

"King of Morven," replied the chief, "I remember thy father with joy. He was terrible in battle; the rage of the chief was deadly. My eyes were full of tears, when the king of heroes fell. The valiant fall, O Fingal! the feeble remain on the hills! How many heroes have paſſed away, in the days of Morni! Yet I did not ſhun the battle; neither did I fly from the ſtrife of the valiant. Now

* Ullin had choſen ill the ſubject of his ſong. The *darkneſs which gathered on Morni's brow*, did not proceed from any diſlike he had to Comhal's name, though they were foes, but from his fear that the ſong would awaken Fingal to a remembrance of the feuds which had ſubſiſted of old between the families. Fingal's ſpeech on this occaſion abounds with generoſity and good ſenſe.

let

let the friends of Fingal rest; for the night is around; that they may rise, with strength, to battle against car-borne Lathmon. I hear the sound of his host, like thunder moving on the hills. Ossian! and fair-haired Gaul! ye are young and swift in the race. Observe the foes of Fingal from that woody hill. But approach them not, your fathers are not near to shield you. Let not your fame fall at once. The valour of youth may fail!"

We heard the words of the chief with joy. We moved in the clang of our arms. Our steps are on the woody hill. Heaven burns with all its stars. The meteors of death fly over the field. The distant noise of the foe reached our ears. It was then Gaul spoke, in his valour: his hand half unsheathed his sword.

"Son of Fingal!" he said, "why burns the soul of Gaul? My heart beats high. My steps are disordered; my hand trembles on my sword. When I look towards the foe, my soul lightens before me. I see their sleeping host. Tremble thus the souls of the valiant in battles of the spear? How would the soul of Morni rise if we should rush on the foe! Our renown would grow in song: our steps would be stately in the eyes of the brave."

"Son of Morni," I replied, "my soul delights in war. I delight to shine in battle alone, to give my name to the bards. But what if the foe should prevail; can I behold the eyes of the king? They are terrible in his displeasure, and like the flames of death.

But I will not behold them in his wrath! Oſſian ſhall prevail or fall. But ſhall the fame of the vanquiſhed riſe? They paſs like a ſhade away. But the fame of Oſſian ſhall riſe! His deeds ſhall be like his father's. Let us ruſh in our arms; ſon of Morni, let us ruſh to fight. Gaul! if thou ſhouldſt return, go to Selma's lofty hall. Tell to Everallin that I fell with fame; carry this ſword to Branno's daughter. Let her give it to Oſcar, when the years of his youth ſhall ariſe."

"Son of Fingal," Gaul replied with a ſigh; "ſhall I return after Oſſian is low? What would my father ſay, what Fingal the king of men? The feeble would turn their eyes and ſay, "Behold Gaul who left his friend in his blood!" Ye ſhall not behold me, ye feeble, but in the midſt of my renown! Oſſian! I have heard from my father the mighty deeds of heroes; their mighty deeds when alone! for the ſoul increaſes in danger."

"Son of Morni," I replied, and ſtrode before him on the heath, "our fathers ſhall praiſe over valour when they mourn our fall. A beam of gladneſs ſhall riſe on their ſouls, when their eyes are full of tears. They will ſay, "Our ſons have not fallen unknown: they ſpread death around them." But why ſhould we think of the narrow houſe? The ſword defends the brave. But death purſues the flight of the feeble; their renown is never heard."

We

We rushed forward through night; we came to the roar of a stream, which bent its blue course round the foe, through trees that echoed to its sound. We came to the bank of the stream, and saw the sleeping host. Their fires were decayed on the plain; the lonely steps of their scouts were distant far. I stretched my spear before me to support my steps over the stream. But Gaul took my hand, and spoke the words of the brave. "Shall the son of Fingal rush on the sleeping foe? Shall he come like a blast by night, when it overturns the young trees in secret? Fingal did not thus receive his fame, nor dwells renown on the grey hairs of Morni, for actions like these. Strike, Ossian, strike the shield, and let their thousands rise! Let them meet Gaul in his first battle, that he may try the strength of his arm."

My soul rejoiced over the warrior: my bursting tears came down. "And the foe shall meet thee, Gaul!" I said: "the fame of Morni's son shall arise. But rush not too far, my hero: let the gleam of thy steel be near to Ossian. Let our hands join in slaughter. Gaul! dost thou not behold that rock? Its grey side dimly gleams to the stars. Should the foe prevail, let our back be towards the rock. Then shall they fear to approach our spears; for death is in our hands!"

I struck thrice my echoing shield. The starting foe arose. We rushed on in the sound of our arms. Their crowded steps fly over

the heath. They thought that the mighty Fingal was come. The ſtrength of their arms withered away. The ſound of their flight was like that of flame, when it ruſhes through the blaſted groves. It was then the ſpear of Gaul flew in its ſtrength; it was then his ſword aroſe. Cremor fell; and mighty Leth. Dunthormo ſtruggled in his blood. The ſteel ruſhed through Crotho's ſide, as bent, he roſe on his ſpear; the black ſtream poured from the wound, and hiſſed on the half-extinguiſhed oak. Cathmin ſaw the ſteps of the hero behind him, he aſcended a blaſted tree; but the ſpear pierced him from behind. Shrieking, panting, he fell. Moſs and withered branches purſue his fall, and ſtrew the blue arms of Gaul.

Such were thy deeds, ſon of Morni, in the firſt of thy battles. Nor ſlept the ſword by thy ſide, thou laſt of Fingal's race! Oſſian ruſhed forward in his ſtrength; the people fell before him; as the graſs by the ſtaff of the boy, when he whiſtles along the field, and the grey beard of the thiſtle falls. But careleſs the youth moves on; his ſteps are towards the deſert. Grey morning roſe around us; the winding ſtreams are bright along the heath. The foe gathered on a hill; and the rage of Lathmon roſe. He bent the red eye of his wrath: he is ſilent in his riſing grief. He often ſtruck his boſſy ſhield; and his ſteps are unequal on the heath. I ſaw the diſtant darkneſs of the hero, and I ſpoke to Morni's ſon.

"Car-borne chief of Strumon, doſt thou behold the foe? They gather on the hill in their wrath. Let our ſteps be towards the king *. He ſhall riſe in his ſtrength, and the hoſt of Lathmon vaniſh. Our fame is around us, warrior, the eyes of the aged † will rejoice. But let us fly, ſon of Morni, Lathmon deſcends the hill." "Then let our ſteps be ſlow," replied the fair-haired Gaul; "leſt the foe ſay, with a ſmile, "Behold the warriors of night. They are, like ghoſts, terrible in darkneſs; they melt away before the beam of the eaſt." Oſſian, take the ſhield of Gormar who fell beneath thy ſpear. The aged heroes will rejoice beholding the deeds of their ſons."

Such were our words on the plain, when Sulmath ‡ came to car-borne Lathmon: Sulmath chief of Dutha at the dark-rolling ſtream of Duvranna §. "Why doſt thou not ruſh, ſon of Nuäth, with a thouſand of thy heroes? Why doſt thou not deſcend with thy hoſt, before the warriors fly? Their blue arms are beaming to the riſing light, and their ſteps are before us on the heath!"

"Son of the feeble hand," ſaid Lathmon, "ſhall my hoſt deſcend! They are but two,

* Fingal. † Fingal and Morni.

‡ Suiſ-mhath, *a man of good eye-ſight.*

§ Dubh-bhranna, *dark mountain-ſtream.* A river in Scotland, which falls into the ſea at Banff, ſtill retains the name of Duvran. If that is meant in this paſſage, Lathmon muſt have been a prince of the Pictiſh nation, or thoſe Caledonians who inhabited of old the eaſtern coaſt of Scotland.

ſon of Dutha! ſhall a thouſand lift their ſteel! Nuäth would mourn, in his hall, for the departure of his fame. His eyes would turn from Lathmon, when the tread of his feet approached. Go thou to the heroes, chief of Dutha! I behold the ſtately ſteps of Oſſian. His fame is worthy of my ſteel! let us contend in fight.

The noble Sulmath came. I rejoiced in the words of the king. I raiſed the ſhield on my arm; Gaul placed in my hand the ſword of Morni. We returned to the murmuring ſtream; Lathmon came down in his ſtrength. His dark hoſt rolled, like clouds, behind him; but the ſon of Nuäth was bright in his ſteel!

"Son of Fingal," ſaid the hero, "thy fame has grown on our fall. How many lie there of my people by thy hand, thou king of men! Lift now thy ſpear againſt Lathmon; lay the ſon of Nuäth low! Lay him low among his warriors, or thou thyſelf muſt fall! It ſhall never be told in my halls that my people fell in my preſence; that they fell in the preſence of Lathmon when his ſword reſted by his ſide: the blue eyes of Cutha would roll in tears; her ſteps be lonely in the vales of Dunlathmon!"

"Neither ſhall it be told," I replied, "that the ſon of Fingal fled. Were his ſteps covered with darkneſs, yet would not Oſſian fly! his ſoul would meet him and ſay, "Does the bard of Selma fear the foe?" "No; he does not fear the foe. His joy is in the midſt of battle!"

Lathmon came on with his ſpear. He pierced the ſhield of Oſſian. I felt the cold ſteel by my ſide. I drew the ſword of Morni. I cut the ſpear in twain. The bright point fell glittering on earth. The ſon of Nuäth burnt in his wrath. He lifted high his ſounding ſhield. His dark eyes rolled above it, as bending forward, it ſhone like a gate of braſs! But Oſſian's ſpear pierced the brightneſs of its boſſes, and ſunk in a tree that roſe behind. The ſhield hung on the quivering lance! but Lathmon ſtill advanced! Gaul foreſaw the fall of the chief. He ſtretched his buckler before my ſword; when it deſcended, in a ſtream of light, over the king of Dunlathmon!

Lathmon beheld the ſon of Morni. The tear ſtarted from his eye. He threw the ſword of his fathers on earth, and ſpoke the words of the brave. "Why ſhould Lathmon fight againſt the firſt of men? Your ſouls are beams from heaven; your ſwords the flames of death! Who can equal the renown of the heroes, whoſe deeds are ſo great in youth? O that ye were in the halls of Nuäth, in the green dwelling of Lathmon! then would my father ſay, that his ſon did not yield to the weak. But who comes, a mighty ſtream, along the echoing heath? the little hills are troubled before him; a thouſand ghoſts are on the beams of his ſteel; the ghoſts of thoſe who are to fall *, by the arm of the king of reſounding

* It was thought in Oſſian's time, that each perſon had his attending ſpirit. The traditions concerning this opinion are dark and unſatisfactory.

ing Morven. Happy art thou, O Fingal! thy ſons ſhall fight thy wars. They go forth before thee; they return with the ſteps of their renown!"

Fingal came, in his mildneſs, rejoicing in ſecret over the deeds of his ſon. Morni's face brightened with gladneſs; his aged eyes look faintly through tears of joy. We came to the halls of Selma. We ſat around the feaſt of ſhells. The maids of ſong came into our preſence, and the mildly bluſhing Everallin! Her hair ſpreads on her neck of ſnow, her eye rolls in ſecret on Oſſian. She touched the harp of muſic; we bleſſed the daughter of Branno!

Fingal roſe in his place, and ſpoke to Lathmon king of ſpears. The ſword of Trenmor ſhook by his ſide, as high he raiſed his mighty arm. "Son of Nuäth," he ſaid, "why doſt thou ſearch for fame in Morven? We are not of the race of the feeble; our ſwords gleam not over the weak. When did we rouſe thee, O Lathmon! with the ſound of war? Fingal does not delight in battle, though his arm is ſtrong! My renown grows on the fall of the haughty. The light of my ſteel pours on the proud in arms. The battle comes! and the tombs of the valiant riſe; the tombs of my people riſe, O my fathers! I at laſt muſt remain alone! But I will remain renowned; the departure of my ſoul ſhall be a ſtream of light. Lathmon! retire to thy place! Turn thy battles to other lands! The race of Morven are renowned; their foes are the ſons of the unhappy!"

DAR-THULA:

A

POEM.

ARGUMENT.

It may not be improper here, to give the ſtory which is the foundation of this poem, as it is handed down by tradition. Uſnoth lord of Etha, which is probably that part of Argyleſhire which is near Loch Eta, an arm of the ſea in Lorn, had three ſons, Nathos, Althos, and Ardan, by Sliſſāma, the daughter of Semo, and ſiſter to the celebrated Cuthullin. The three brothers, when very young, were ſent over to Ireland, by their father, to learn the uſe of arms, under their uncle Cuthullin, who made a great figure in that kingdom. They were juſt landed in Ulſter, when the news of Cuthullin's death arrived. Nathos, though very young, took the command of Cuthullin's army, made head againſt Cairbar the uſurper, and defeated him in ſeveral battles. Cairbar at laſt having found means to murder Cormac the lawful king, the army of Nathos ſhifted ſides, and he himſelf was obliged to return into Ulſter, in order to paſs over into Scotland.

Dar-thula, the daughter of Colla, with whom Cairbar was in love, reſided, at that time, in Selâma, a caſtle in Ulſter: ſhe ſaw, fell in love, and fled with Nathos; but a ſtorm riſing at ſea they were unfortunately driven back on that part of the coaſt of Ulſter, where Cairbar was encamped with his army. The three brothers, after having defended themſelves, for ſome time, with great bravery, were overpowered and ſlain, and the unfortunate Dar-thula killed herſelf upon the body of her beloved Nathos.

The poem opens, on the night preceding the death of the ſons of Uſnoth, and brings in, by way of epiſode, what paſſed before. It relates the death of Dar-thula differently from the common tradition; this account is the moſt probable, as ſuicide ſeems to have been unknown in thoſe early times: for no traces of it are found in the old poetry.

DAR-THULA:

A

POEM.

DAUGHTER of heaven, fair art thou! the ſilence of thy face is pleaſant! Thou comeſt forth in lovelineſs. The ſtars attend thy blue courſe in the eaſt. The clouds rejoice in thy preſence, O moon! They brighten their dark-brown ſides. Who is like thee in heaven, light of the ſilent night? The ſtars are aſhamed in thy preſence. They turn away their ſparkling eyes. Whither doſt thou retire from thy courſe, when the darkneſs of thy countenance grows? Haſt thou thy hall, like Oſſian? Dwelleſt thou in the ſhadow of grief? Have thy ſiſters fallen from heaven? Are they who rejoiced with thee, at night, no more? Yes! they have fallen, fair light! and thou doſt often retire to mourn. But thou thyſelf ſhalt fail, one night; and leave thy blue path in heaven. The ſtars will then lift their heads: they, who were aſhamed in thy preſence, will rejoice. Thou art now clothed with thy brightneſs. Look from thy gates in the ſky. Burſt the cloud, O wind! that the daughter of night may look forth! that the ſhaggy mountains

tains may brighten, and the ocean roll its white waves, in light.

Nathos * is on the deep, and Althos, that beam of youth. Ardan is near his brothers. They move in the gloom of their course. The sons of Usnoth move in darkness, from the wrath of Cairbar † of Erin. Who is that, dim by their side? The night has covered her beauty! Her hair sighs on ocean's wind. Her robe streams in dusky wreaths. She is like the fair spirit of heaven in the midst of his shadowy mist. Who is it but Dar-thula ‡, the first of Erin's maids? She has fled from the love of Cairbar, with blue-shielded Nathos. But the winds deceive thee, O Dar-thula! They deny the woody Etha, to thy sails. These are not the mountains of Nathos; nor is that the roar of his climbing waves. The halls of Cairbar are near: the towers of the foe lift their heads! Erin stretches its green head into the sea. Tura's bay receives the ship. Where have ye been, ye southern winds! when the sons of my love were deceived? But ye have been sporting on plains,

* Nathos signifies, *youthful*; Althos, *exquisite beauty*; Ardan, *pride*.

† Cairbar, who murdered Cormac king of Ireland, and usurped the throne. He was afterwards killed by Oscar the son of Ossian in a single combat. The poet, upon other occasions, gives him the epithet of red-haired.

‡ Dar-thúla, or Dart-'huile, *a woman with fine eyes*. She was the most famous beauty of antiquity. To this day, when a woman is praised for her beauty, the common phrase is, that *she is as lovely as Dar-thula*.

pursuing

pursuing the thistle's beard. O that ye had been rustling in the sails of Nathos, till the hills of Etha arose! till they arose in their clouds, and saw their returning chief! Long hast thou been absent, Nathos! the day of thy return is past!

But the land of strangers saw thee, lovely! thou wast lovely in the eyes of Dar-thula. Thy face was like the light of the morning. Thy hair like the raven's wing. Thy soul was generous and mild, like the hour of the setting sun. Thy words were the gale of the reeds; the gliding stream of Lora! But when the rage of battle rose, thou wast a sea in a storm. The clang of thy arms was terrible: the host vanished at the sound of thy course. It was then Dar-thula beheld thee, from the top of her mossy tower: from the tower of Seláma *, where her fathers dwelt.

"Lovely art thou, O stranger!" she said, for her trembling soul arose. "Fair art thou in thy battles, friend of the fallen Cormac †! Why dost thou rush on in thy valour, youth of the ruddy look? Few are thy hands in fight, against the dark-brown Cairbar! O that I

* The word signifies either *beautiful to behold*, or a place *with a pleasant or wide prospect*. In early times, they built their houses upon eminences, to command a view of the country, and to prevent their being surprized: many of them, on that account, were called Seláma. The famous Selma of Fingal is derived from the same root.

† Cormac the young king of Ireland, who was privately murdered by Cairbar.

might be freed from his love*! that I might rejoice in the presence of Nathos! Blest are the rocks of Etha! they will behold his steps at the chase! they will see his white bosom, when the winds lift his flowing hair!" Such were thy words, Dar-thula, in Seláma's mossy towers. But, now, the night is around thee. The winds have deceived thy sails. The winds have deceived thy sails, Dar-thula! Their blustering sound is high. Cease a little while, O north wind! Let me hear the voice of the lovely. Thy voice is lovely, Dar-thula, between the rustling blasts!

"Are these the rocks of Nathos?" she said, "this the roar of his mountain-streams? Comes that beam of light from Usnoth's nightly hall? The mist spreads around; the beam is feeble and distant far. But the light of Dar-thula's soul dwells in the chief of Etha! Son of the generous Usnoth, why that broken sigh? Are we in the land of strangers, chief of echoing Etha!"

"These are not the rocks of Nathos," he replied, "nor this the roar of his streams. No light comes from Etha's halls, for they are distant far. We are in the land of strangers, in the land of cruel Cairbar. The winds have deceived us, Dar-thula. Erin lifts here her hills. Go towards the north, Althos: be thy steps, Ardan, along the coast; that the foe may not come in darkness, and our hopes of Etha fail." "I will go towards that mossy

* That is, of the love of Cairbar.

tower,

tower, to see who dwells about the beam. Rest, Dar-thula, on the shore! rest in peace, thou lovely light! the sword of Nathos is around thee, like the lightning of heaven!"

He went. She sat alone; she heard the rolling of the wave. The big tear is in her eye. She looks for returning Nathos. Her soul trembles at the blast. She turns her ear towards the tread of his feet. The tread of his feet is not heard. "Where art thou, son of my love! The roar of the blast is around me. Dark is the cloudy night. But Nathos does not return. What detains thee, chief of Etha? Have the foes met the hero in the strife of the night?"

He returned, but his face was dark. He had seen his departed friend! It was the wall of Tura. The ghost of Cuthullin stalked there alone: the sighing of his breast was frequent. The decayed flame of his eyes was terrible! His spear was a column of mist. The stars looked dim through his form. His voice was like hollow wind in a cave: his eye a light seen afar. He told the tale of grief. The soul of Nathos was sad, like the sun in the day of mist, when his face is watry and dim.

"Why art thou sad, O Nathos?" said the lovely daughter of Colla. "Thou art a pillar of light to Dar-thula. The joy of her eyes is in Etha's chief. Where is my friend, but Nathos? My father, my brother is fallen! Silence dwells in Seláma. Sadness spreads on the blue streams of my land. My friends

have fallen with Cormac. The mighty were ſlain in the battles of Erin. Hear, ſon of Eſnoth! hear, O Nathos! my tale of grief.

"Evening darkened on the plain. The blue ſtreams failed before mine eyes. The unfrequent blaſt came ruſtling, in the tops of Seláma's groves. My ſeat was beneath a tree, on the walls of my fathers. Truthil paſt before my ſoul; the brother of my love: he that was abſent in battle, againſt the haughty Cairbar! Bending on his ſpear, the grey-haired Colla came. His downcaſt face is dark, and ſorrow dwells in his ſoul. His ſword is on the ſide of the hero: the helmet of his fathers on his head. The battle grows in his breaſt. He ſtrives to hide the tear."

"Dar-thula, my daughter," he ſaid, "thou art the laſt of Colla's race! Truthil is fallen in battle. The chief of Seláma is no more! Cairbar comes, with his thouſands, towards Seláma's walls. Colla will meet his pride, and revenge his ſon. But where ſhall I find thy ſafety, Darthula with the dark-brown hair! thou art lovely as the ſun-beam of heaven, and thy friends are low!" "Is the ſon of battle fallen?" I ſaid, with a burſting ſigh. "Ceaſed the generous ſoul of Truthil to lighten through the field? My ſafety, Colla, is in that bow. I have learned to pierce the deer. Is not Cairbar, like the hart of the deſert, father of fallen Truthil?"

"The face of age brightened with joy. The crowded tears of his eyes poured down.

The

The lips of Colla trembled. His grey beard whiſtled in the blaſt. "Thou art the ſiſter of Truthil," he ſaid; "thou burneſt in the fire of his ſoul. Take, Dar-thula, take that ſpear, that brazen ſhield, that burniſhed helm: they are the ſpoils of a warrior, a ſon of early youth! When the light riſes on Seláma, we go to meet the car-borne Cairbar. But keep thou near the arm of Colla, beneath the ſhadow of my ſhield. Thy father, Dar-thula, could once defend thee; but age is trembling on his hand. The ſtrength of his arm has failed. His ſoul is darkened with grief."

"We paſſed the night in ſorrow. The light of morning roſe. I ſhone in the arms of battle. The grey-haired hero moved before. The ſons of Seláma convened, around the ſounding ſhield of Colla. But few were they in the plain, and their locks were grey. The youths had fallen with Truthil, in the battle of car-borne Cormac. "Friends of my youth!" ſaid Colla, "it was not thus you have ſeen me in arms. It was not thus I ſtrode to battle, when the great Confaden fell. But ye are laden with grief. The darkneſs of age comes like the miſt of the deſert. My ſhield is worn with years! my ſword is fixed* in its place!

* It was the cuſtom of ancient times, that every warrior, at a certain age, or when he became unfit for the field, fixed his arms in the great hall, where the tribe feaſted upon joyful occaſions. He was afterwards never to appear in battle; and this ſtage of life was called the *time of fixing the arms.*

I said to my soul, thy evening shall be calm: thy departure like a fading light. But the storm has returned. I bend like an aged oak. My boughs are fallen on Seláma. I tremble in my place. Where art thou, with thy fallen heroes, O my beloved Truthil! Thou answerest not from thy rushing blast. The soul of thy father is sad. But I will be sad no more, Cairbar or Colla must fall! I feel the returning strength of my arm. My heart leaps at the sound of war."

"The hero drew his sword. The gleaming blades of his people rose. They moved along the plain. Their grey hair streamed in the wind. Cairbar sat at the feast, in the silent plain of Lona *. He saw the coming of the heroes. He called his chiefs to war. Why † should I tell to Nathos, how the strife of battle grew? I have seen thee in the midst of thousands, like the beam of heaven's fire: it is beautiful, but terrible; the people fall in its dreadful course. The spear of Colla flew. He remembered the battles of his youth. An ar-

* Lona, *a marshy plain*. Cairbar had just provided an entertainment for his army, upon the defeat of Truthil the son of Colla, and the rest of the party of Cormac, when Colla and his aged warriors arrived to give him battle.

† The poet, by an artifice, avoids the description of the battle of Lona, as it would be improper in the mouth of a woman, and could have nothing new, after the numerous descriptions, of that kind, in the rest of the poems. He, at the same time, gives an opportunity to Dar-thula to pass a fine compliment on her lover.

row

row came with its ſound. It pierced the heroe's ſide. He fell on his echoing ſhield. My ſoul ſtarted with fear. I ſtretched my buckler over him; but my heaving breaſt was ſeen! Cairbar came with his ſpear. He beheld Seláma's maid. Joy roſe on his dark-brown face. He ſtayed the lifted ſteel. He raiſed the tomb of Colla. He brought me weeping to Selāma. He ſpoke the words of love, but my ſoul was ſad. I ſaw the ſhields of my fathers; the ſword of car-borne Truthil. I ſaw the arms of the dead; the tear was on my cheek! Then thou didſt come, O Nathos! and gloomy Cairbar fled. He fled like the ghoſt of the deſert before the morning's beam. His hoſt was not near: and feeble was his arm againſt thy ſteel! Why art thou ſad, O Nathos! ſaid the lovely daughter of Colla?"

"I have met," replied the hero, "the battle in my youth. My arm could not lift the ſpear when danger firſt aroſe. My ſoul brightened in the preſence of war, as the green narrow vale, when the ſun pours his ſtreamy beams, before he hides his head in a ſtorm. The lonely traveller feels a mournful joy. He ſees the darkneſs, that ſlowly comes. My ſoul brightened in danger before I ſaw Seláma's fair; before I ſaw thee, like a ſtar, that ſhines on the hill, at night: the cloud advances, and threatens the lovely light! We are in the land of foes. The winds have deceived us, Darthula! The ſtrength of our friends is not near, nor the mountains of Etha. Where ſhall I

find thy peace, daughter of mighty Colla! The brothers of Nathos are brave! and his own ſword has ſhone in fight. But what are the ſons of Uſnoth to the hoſt of dark-browed Cairbar! O that the winds had brought thy ſails, Oſcar * king of men! Thou didſt promiſe to come to the battles of fallen Cormac! Then would my hand be ſtrong, as the flaming arm of death. Cairbar would tremble in his halls, and peace dwell round thy lovely Dar-thula. But why doſt thou fall, my ſoul? The ſons of Uſnoth may prevail!"

"And they will prevail, O Nathos!" ſaid the riſing ſoul of the maid. "Never ſhall Dar-thula behold the halls of gloomy Cairbar. Give me thoſe arms of braſs, that glitter to the paſſing meteor. I ſee them dimly in the dark-boſomed ſhip. Dar-thula will enter the battle of ſteel. Ghoſt of the noble Colla! do I behold thee on that cloud? Who is that dim beſide thee? Is it the car-borne Truthil? Shall I behold the halls of him that ſlew Seláma's chief? No: I will not behold them, ſpirits of my love!"

Joy roſe in the face of Nathos, when he heard the white-boſomed maid. "Daughter of Seláma! thou ſhineſt along my ſoul. Come, with thy thouſands, Cairbar! the ſtrength of

* Oſcár, the ſon of Oſſian, had long reſolved on the expedition into Ireland, againſt Cairbar, who had aſſaſſinated his friend Cathol, the ſon of Moran, an Iriſhman of noble extraction, and in the intereſt of the family of Cormac.

Nathos

Nathos is returned! Thou, O aged Usnoth! shalt not hear that thy son has fled. I remember thy words on Etha; when my sails began to rise: when I spread them towards Erin, towards the mossy walls of Tura! "Thou goest," he said, "O Nathos, to the king of shields! Thou goest to Cuthullin, chief of men, who never fled from danger. Let not thine arm be feeble: neither be thy thoughts of flight; lest the son of Semo should say, that Etha's race are weak. His words may come to Usnoth, and sadden his soul in the hall." The tear was on my father's cheek. He gave this shining sword!

"I came to Tura's bay: but the halls of Tura were silent. I looked around, and there was none to tell of the son of generous Semo. I went to the hall of shells, where the arms of his fathers hung. But the arms were gone, and aged Lamhor * sat in tears. "Whence are the arms of steel?" said the rising Lamhor. "The light of the spear has long been absent from Tura's dusky walls. Come ye from the rolling sea? or from Temora's † mournful halls?"

"We come from the sea," I said, "from Usnoth's rising towers. We are the sons of

* Lamh-mhor, *mighty hand.*

† Temora was the residence of the supreme kings of Ireland. It is here called mournful, on account of the death of Cormac, who was murdered there by Cairbar, who usurped his throne.

Slis-

Slis-ſáma *, the daughter of car-borne Semo. Where is Tura's chief, ſon of the ſilent hall? But why ſhould Nathos aſk? for I behold thy tears. How did the mighty fall, ſon of the lonely Tura?" "He fell not," Lamhor replied, "like the ſilent ſtar of night, when it flies through darkneſs and is no more. But he was like a meteor that ſhoots into a diſtant land. Death attends its dreary courſe. Itſelf is the ſign of wars. Mournful are the banks of Lego; and the roar of ſtreamy Lara! There the hero fell, ſon of the noble Uſnoth!" "The hero fell in the midſt of ſlaughter," I ſaid with a burſting ſigh. "His hand was ſtrong in war. Death dimly ſat behind his ſword."

We came to Lego's ſounding banks. We found his riſing tomb. His friends in battle are there; his bards of many ſongs. Three days we mourned over the hero: on the fourth, I ſtruck the ſhield of Caithbat. The heroes gathered around with joy, and ſhook their beamy ſpears. Corlath was near with his hoſt, the friend of car-borne Cairbar. We came like a ſtream by night. His heroes fell before us. When the people of the valley roſe, they ſaw their blood with morning's light. But we rolled away, like wreaths of miſt, to Cormac's echoing hall. Our ſwords roſe to defend the king. But Temora's halls

* Slis-ſeamha, *ſoft boſom*. She was the wife of Uſnoth, and daughter of Semo the chief of the *iſle of miſt*.

were

were empty. Cormac had fallen in his youth. The king of Erin was no more!

Sadneſs ſeized the ſons of Erin. They ſlowly, gloomily retired: like clouds that, long having threatened rain, vaniſh behind the hills. The ſons of Uſnoth moved, in their grief, towards Tura's ſounding bay. We paſſed by Seláma. Cairbar retired like Lano's miſt, when driven before the winds. It was then I beheld thee, O Dar-thula! like the light of Etha's ſun. "Lovely is that beam!" I ſaid. The crowded ſigh of my boſom roſe. "Thou cameſt in thy beauty, Dar-thula, to Etha's mournful chief. But the winds have deceived us, daughter of Colla, and the foe is near!"

"Yes, the foe is near," ſaid the ruſhing ſtrength of Althos *. "I heard their clanging arms on the coaſt. I ſaw the dark wreaths of Erin's ſtandard. Diſtinct is the voice of Cairbar †, loud as Cromla's falling ſtream. He had ſeen the dark ſhip on the ſea, before the duſky night came down. His people watch on Lena's plain. They lift ten thouſand ſwords." "And let them lift ten thouſand

* Althos had juſt returned from viewing the coaſt of Lena, whither he had been ſent by Nathos, the beginning of the night.

† Cairbar had gathered an army to the coaſt of Ulſter, in order to oppoſe Fingal, who prepared for an expedition into Ireland to re-eſtabliſh the houſe of Cormac on the throne, which Cairbar had uſurped. Between the wings of Cairbar's army was the bay of Tura, into which the ſhip of the ſons of Uſnoth was driven: ſo that there was no poſſibility of their eſcaping.

ſwords,"

swords," said Nathos with a smile. "The sons of car-borne Usnoth will never tremble in danger! Why dost thou roll with all thy foam, thou roaring sea of Erin? Why do ye rustle, on your dark wings, ye whistling storms of the sky? Do ye think, ye storms, that ye keep Nathos on the coast? No: his soul detains him, children of the night! Althos! bring my father's arms: thou seest them beaming to the stars. Bring the spear of Semo*. It stands on the dark-bosomed ship!"

He brought the arms. Nathos covered his limbs, in all their shining steel. The stride of the chief is lovely. The joy of his eyes was terrible. He looks towards the coming of Cairbar. The wind is rustling in his hair. Dar-thula is silent at his side. Her look is fixed on the chief. She strives to hide the rising sigh. Two tears swell in her radiant eyes!

"Althos!" said the chief of Etha, "I see a cave in that rock. Place Dar-thula there. Let thy arm, my brother, be strong. Ardan! we meet the foe; call to battle gloomy Cairbar. O that he came in his sounding steel, to meet the son of Usnoth! Dar-thula! if thou shalt escape, look not on the fallen Nathos! Lift thy sails, O Althos! towards the echoing groves of my land.

* Semo was grandf[illegible] to Nathos by the mother's side. The spear m[illegible] was given to Usnoth on his marriage, in [illegible] for the father of the lady to [illegible] to his [illegible],

"Tell

"Tell the chief * that his son fell with fame; that my sword did not shun the fight. Tell him I fell in the midst of thousands. Let the joy of his grief be great. Daughter of Colla! call the maids to Etha's echoing hall! Let their songs arise from Nathos, when shadowy autumn returns. O that the voice of Cona, that Ossian, might be heard in my praise! then would my spirit rejoice in the midst of the rushing winds." "And my voice shall praise thee, Nathos, chief of the woody Etha! The voice of Ossian shall rise in thy praise, son of the generous Usnoth! Why was I not on Lena, when the battle rose? Then would the sword of Ossian defend thee; or himself fall low!"

We sat, that night, in Selma round the strength of the shell. The wind was abroad, in the oaks. The spirit of the mountain † roared. The blast came rustling through the hall, and gently touched my harp. The sound was mournful and low, like the song of the tomb. Fingal heard it the first. The crowded sighs of his bosom rose. "Some of my heroes are low," said the grey-haired king of Morven. "I hear the sound of death on the harp. Ossian, touch the trembling string. Bid the sorrow rise; that their spirits may fly with joy to Morven's woody hills!" I touched

* Usnoth.

† By the spirit of the mountain is meant that deep and melancholy sound which precedes a storm; well known to those who live in a high country.

the harp before the king; the sound was mournful and low. "Bend forward from your clouds," I said, "ghosts of my fathers! bend. Lay by the red terror of your course. Receive the falling chief; whether he comes from a distant land, or rises from the rolling sea. Let his robe of mist be near; his spear that is formed of a cloud. Place an half-extinguished meteor by his side, in the form of the hero's sword. And, oh! let his countenance be lovely, that his friends may delight in his presence. Bend from your clouds," I said, "ghosts of my fathers! bend!"

Such was my song, in Selma, to the lightly trembling harp. But Nathos was on Erin's shore; surrounded by the night. He heard the voice of the foe, amidst the roar of tumbling waves. Silent he heard their voice, and rested on his spear! Morning rose, with its beams. The sons of Erin appear, like grey rocks, with all their trees, they spread along the coast. Cairbar stood in the midst. He grimly smiled when he saw the foe. Nathos rushed forward, in his strength: nor could Dar-thula stay behind. She came with the hero, lifting her shining spear. "And who are these, in their armour, in the pride of youth? Who but the sons of Usnoth, Althos and dark-haired Arden?"

"Come," said Nathos, "come! chief of high Temora! Let our battle be on the coast, for the white-bosomed maid. His people are not with Nathos; they are behind these rolling

seas

ſeas. Why doſt thou bring thy thouſands againſt the chief of Etha? Thou didſt fly* from him in battle, when his friends were around his ſpear." "Youth of the heart of pride, ſhall Erin's king fight with thee? Thy fathers were not among the renowned, nor of the kings of men. Are the arms of foes in their halls? or the ſhields of other times? Cairbar is renowned in Temora, nor does he fight with feeble men!"

The tear ſtarted from car-borne Nathos. He turned his eyes to his brothers. Their ſpears f[illegible] once. Three heroes lay on earth. Then the light of their ſwords gleamed on high. The ranks of Erin yield; as a ridge of dark clouds before a blaſt of wind! Then Cairbar ordered his people, and they drew a thouſand bows. A thouſand arrows flew. The ſons of Uſnoth fell in blood. They fell like three young oaks, which ſtood alone on the hill: the traveller ſaw the lovely trees, and wondered how they grew ſo lonely: the blaſt of the deſert came by night, and laid their green heads low; next day he returned, but they were withered, and the heath was bare!

Dar-thula ſtood in ſilent grief, and beheld their fall! No tear is in her eye. But her look is wildly ſad. Pale was her cheek. Her trembling lips broke ſhort an half-formed word. Her dark hair flew on wind. The gloomy Cairbar came. "Where is thy lover now?

* He alludes to the flight of Cairbar from Seláma.

the car-borne chief of Etha? Haſt thou beheld the halls of Uſnoth? or the dark-brown hills of Fingal? My battle would have roared on Morven, had not the winds met Dar-thula. Fingal himſelf would have been low, and ſorrow dwelling in Selma!" Her ſhield fell from Dar-thula's arm. Her breaſt of ſnow appeared. It appeared; but it was ſtained with blood. An arrow was fixed in her ſide. She fell on the fallen Nathos, like a wreath of ſnow! Her hair ſpreads wide on his face. Their blood is mixing round!

"Daughter of Colla! thou art low!" ſaid Cairbar's hundred bards. "Silence is at the blue ſtreams of Seláma. Truthil's* race have failed. When wilt thou riſe in thy beauty, firſt of Erin's maids? Thy ſleep is long in the tomb. The morning diſtant far. The ſun ſhall not come to thy bed and ſay, "Awake, Dar-thula! awake, thou firſt of women! the wind of ſpring is abroad. The flowers ſhake their heads on the green hills. The woods wave their growing leaves. Retire, O ſun! the daughter of Colla is aſleep. She will not come forth in her beauty. She will not move in the ſteps of her lovelineſs!"

Such was the ſong of the bards, when they raiſed the tomb. I ſung over the grave, when the king of Morven came; when he came to green Erin to fight with car-borne Cairbar!

* Truthil was the founder of Dar-thula's family.

THE
DEATH of CUTHULLIN:
A
P O E M.

ARGUMENT.

Cuthullin, after the arms of Fingal had expelled Swaran from Ireland, continued to manage the affairs of that kingdom as the guardian of Cormac, the young king. In the third year of Cuthullin's adminiſtration, Torlath, the ſon of Cantéla, rebelled in Connaught; and advanced to Temora to dethrone Cormac. Cuthullin marched againſt him, came up with him at the lake of Lego, and totally defeated his forces. Torlath fell in battle by Cuthullin's hand; but as he too eagerly preſſed on the enemy, he was mortally wounded. The affairs of Cormac, though, for ſome time, ſupported by Nathos, as mentioned in the preceding poem, fell into confuſion at the death of Cuthullin. Cormac himſelf was ſlain by the rebel Cairbar; and the re-eſtabliſhment of the royal family of Ireland by Fingal, furniſhes the ſubject of the epic poem of Temora.

THE

DEATH of CUTHULLIN:

A

POEM.

"IS the wind on the ſhield of Fingal? Or is the voice of paſt times in my hall? Sing on, ſweet voice! for thou art pleaſant. Thou carrieſt away my night with joy. Sing on, O Bragéla, daughter of car-borne Sorglan!

"It is the white wave of the rock, and not Cuthullin's ſails. Often do the miſts deceive me for the ſhip of my love! when they riſe round ſome ghoſt, and ſpread their grey ſkirts on the wind. Why doſt thou delay thy coming, ſon of the generous Semo? Four times has autumn returned with its winds, and raiſed the ſeas of Togorma*, ſince thou haſt been in

* Togorma, *i. e. the iſland of blue waves*, one of the Hebrides, was ſubject to Connal, the ſon of Caithbat, Cuthullin's friend. He is ſometimes called the ſon of Colgar, from one of that name who was the founder of the family. Connal, a few days before the news of Torlath's revolt, came to Temora, had ſailed to Togorma, his native iſle; where he was detained by contrary winds during the war in which Cuthullin was killed.

the roar of battles, and Bragéla diſtant far! Hills of the iſle of miſt! when will ye anſwer to his hounds? But ye are dark in your clouds. Sad Bragéla calls in vain! Night comes rolling down. The face of ocean fails. The heath-cock's head is beneath his wing. The hind ſleeps, with the hart of the deſert. They ſhall riſe with morning's light, and feed by the moſſy ſtream. But my tears return with the ſun. My ſighs come on with the night. When wilt thou come in thine arms, O chief of Erin's wars?"

Pleaſant is thy voice in Oſſian's ear, daughter of car-borne Sorglan! But retire to the hall of ſhells; to the beam of the burning oak. Attend to the murmur of the ſea: it rolls at Dunſcai's walls: let ſleep deſcend on thy blue eyes. Let the hero ariſe in thy dreams!

Cuthullin ſits at Lego's lake, at the dark rolling of waters. Night is around the hero. His thouſands ſpread on the heath. A hundred oaks burn in the midſt. The feaſt of ſhells is ſmoaking wide. Carril ſtrikes the harp beneath a tree. His grey locks glitter in the beam. The ruſtling blaſt of night is near, and lifts his aged hair. His ſong is of the blue Togorma, and of its chief, Cuthullin's friend! "Why art thou abſent, Connal, in the day of the gloomy ſtorm? The chiefs of the ſouth have convened, againſt the car-borne Cormac. The winds detain thy ſails. Thy blue waters roll around thee. But Cormac is not alone. The ſon of Semo fights his wars!

Semo's

Semo's ſon his battles fights! the terror of the ſtranger! He that is like the vapour of death, ſlowly borne by ſultry winds. The ſun reddens in its preſence: the people fall around."

Such was the ſong of Carril, when a ſon of the foe appeared. He threw down his pointleſs ſpear. He ſpoke the words of Torlath! Torlath, chief of heroes, from Lego's ſable ſurge! He that led his thouſands to battle, againſt car-borne Cormac. Cormac who was diſtant far, in Temora's* echoing halls: he learned to bend the bow of his fathers; and to lift the ſpear. Not long didſt thou lift the ſpear, mildly-ſhining beam of youth! death ſtands dim behind thee, like the darkened half of the moon behind its growing light! Cuthullin roſe before the bard †, that came from generous Torlath. He offered him the ſhell of joy. He honoured the ſon of ſongs. "Sweet voice of Lego!" he ſaid, "what are the words of Torlath? Comes he to our feaſt or battle, the car-borne ſon of Cantéla ‡?"

"He comes to thy battle," replied the bard, "to the ſounding ſtrife of ſpears. When

* The royal palace of the Iriſh kings; Team-hrath, according to ſome of the bards.

† The bards were the heralds of ancient times; and their perſons were ſacred on account of their office. In later times they abuſed that privilege; and as their perſons were inviolable, they ſatirized and lampooned ſo freely thoſe who were not liked by their patrons, that they became a public nuiſance. Screened under the character of heralds, they groſsly abuſed the enemy when he would not accept the terms they offered.

‡ Cean-teola', *head of a family*.

morning is grey on Lego, Torlath will fight on the plain. Wilt thou meet him, in thine arms, king of the isle of mist? Terrible is the spear of Torlath! it is a meteor of night. He lifts it, and the people fall! death sits in the lightning of his sword!" "Do I fear," replied Cuthullin, "the spear of car-borne Torlath? He is brave as a thousand heroes: but my soul delights in war! The sword rests not by the side of Cuthullin, bard of the times of old! Morning shall meet me on the plain, and gleam on the blue arms of Semo's son. But sit thou on the heath, O bard! and let us hear thy voice. Partake of the joyful shell: and hear the songs of Temora!"

"This is no time," replied the bard, "to hear the song of joy: when the mighty are to meet in battle, like the strength of the waves of Lego. Why art thou so dark, Slimora *! with all thy silent woods? No star trembles on thy top. No moon-beam on thy side. But the meteors of death are there: the grey watry forms of ghosts. Why art thou dark, Slimora! with thy silent woods?" He retired, in the sound of his song. Carril joined his voice. The music was like the memory of joys that are past, pleasant and mournful to the soul. The ghosts of departed bards heard on Slimora's side. Soft sounds spread along the wood. The silent valleys of night rejoice. So, when

* Slia'mor, *great hill*.

he

he ſits in the ſilence of the day, in the valley of his breeze, the humming of the mountain bee comes to Oſſian's ear: the gale drowns it in its courſe; but the pleaſant ſound returns again! Slant looks the ſun on the field! gradual grows the ſhade of the hill!

"Raiſe," ſaid Cuthullin, to his hundred bards, "the ſong of the noble Fingal: that ſong which he hears at night, when the dreams of his reſt deſcend: when the bards ſtrike the diſtant harp, and the faint light gleams on Selma's walls. Or let the grief of Lara riſe: the ſighs of the mother of Calmar *, when he was ſought, in vain, on his hills; when ſhe beheld his bow in the hall. Carril, place the ſhield of Caithbat on that branch. Let the ſpear of Cuthullin be near; that the ſound of my battle may riſe, with the grey beam of the eaſt." The hero leaned on his father's ſhield: the ſong of Lara roſe! The hundred bards were diſtant far: Carril alone is near the chief. The words of the ſong were his: the ſound of his harp was mournful.

"Alclétha † with the aged locks! mother of car-borne Calmar! why doſt thou look

* Calmar, the ſon of Matha. His death is related at large in the third book of Fingal. He was the only ſon of Matha; and the family was extinct in him. The ſeat of the family was on the banks of the river Lara, in the neighbourhood of Lego, and probably near the place where Cuthullin lay; which circumſtance ſuggeſted to him, the lamentation of Alcletha over her ſon.

† Ald-cla'tha, *decaying beauty*: probably a poetical name given the mother of Calmar, by the bard himſelf.

toward the desert, to behold the return of thy son? These are not his heroes, dark on the heath: nor is that the voice of Calmar. It is but the distant grove, Alclétha! but the roar of the mountain-wind!" "Who* bounds over Lara's stream, sister of the noble Calmar? Does not Alclétha behold his spear? But her eyes are dim! Is it not the son of Matha, daughter of my love?"

"It is but an aged oak, Alclétha!" replied the lovely weeping Alona †. "It is but an oak, Alclétha, bent over Lara's stream. But who comes along the plain? sorrow is in his speed. He lifts high the spear of Calmar. Alclétha, it is covered with blood!" "But it is covered with the blood of foes ‡, sister of car-borne Calmar! His spear never returned unstained with blood: nor his bow from the strife of the mighty. The battle is consumed in his presence: he is a flame of death, Alona! Youth § of the mournful speed! where is the son of Alclétha? Does he return with his fame, in the midst of his echoing shields? Thou art dark and silent! Calmar is then no more! Tell me not, warrior, how he fell. I

* Alclétha speaks. Calmar had promised to return by a certain day, and his mother and his sister Alona are represented as looking, with impatience, towards that quarter where they expected Calmar should make his first appearance.

† Aluine, *exquisitely beautiful.*

‡ Alclétha speaks.

§ She addresses herself to Larnir, Calmar's friend, who has returned with the news of his death.

must

must not hear of his wound!" Why doſt thou look towards the deſert, mother of low-laid Calmar?

Such was the ſong of Carril, when Cuthullin lay on his ſhield. The bards reſted on their harps. Sleep fell ſoftly around. The ſon of Semo was awake alone. His ſoul was fixed on war. The burning oaks began to decay. Faint red light is ſpread around. A feeble voice is heard! The ghoſt of Calmar came! He ſtalked dimly along the beam. Dark is the wound in his ſide. His hair is diſordered and looſe. Joy ſits pale on his face. He ſeems to invite Cuthullin to his cave.

"Son of the cloudy night!" ſaid the riſing chief of Erin. "Why doſt thou bend thy dark eyes on me, ghoſt of the noble Calmar? Wouldeſt thou frighten me, O Matha's ſon! from the battles of Cormac? Thy hand was not feeble in war; neither was thy voice for peace. How art thou changed, chief of Lara! if thou now doſt adviſe to fly! But, Calmar, I never fled. I never feared the ghoſts of night. Small is their knowledge, weak their hands; their dwelling is in the wind. But my ſoul grows in danger, and rejoices in the noiſe of ſteel. Retire thou to thy cave. Thou art not Calmar's ghoſt. He delighted in battle. His arm was like the thunder of heaven!" He retired in his blaſt with joy, for he had heard the voice of his praiſe.

The faint beam of the morning roſe. The ſound of Caithbat's buckler ſpread. Green Erin's

Erin's warriors convened, like the roar of many ſtreams. The horn of war is heard over Lego. The mighty Torlath came! "Why doſt thou come with thy thouſands, Cuthullin?" ſaid the chief of Lego. "I know the ſtrength of thy arm. Thy ſoul is an unextinguiſhed fire. Why fight we not on the plain, and let our hoſts behold our deeds? Let them behold us like roaring waves, that tumble round a rock: the mariners haſten away, and look on their ſtrife with fear."

"Thou riſeſt, like the ſun, on my ſoul," replied the ſon of Semo. "Thine arm is mighty, O Torlath! and worthy of my wrath. Retire, ye men of Ullin, to Slimora's ſhady ſide. Behold the chief of Erin, in the day of his fame. Carril! tell to mighty Connal, if Cuthullin muſt fall, tell him I accuſed the winds, which roar on Togorma's waves. Never was he abſent in battle, when the ſtrife of my fame aroſe. Let his ſword be before Cormac, like the beam of heaven. Let his counſel ſound in Temora, in the day of danger!"

He ruſhed, in the ſound of his arms, like the terrible ſpirit of Loda *, when he comes, in the roar of a thouſand ſtorms, and ſcatters battles from his eyes. He ſits on a cloud over Lochlin's ſeas. His mighty hand is on his ſword. Winds lift his flaming locks! The

* Loda, in the third book of Fingal, is mentioned as a place of worſhip in Scandinavia: by the *ſpirit of Loda*, the poet probably means Odin, the great deity of the northern nations. He is deſcribed here with all his terrors.

waning

waning moon half-lights his dreadful face. His features blended in darkneſs ariſe to view. So terrible was Cuthullin in the day of his fame. Torlath fell by his hand. Lego's heroes mourned. They gather around the chief, like the clouds of the deſert. A thouſand ſwords roſe at once; a thouſand arrows flew; but he ſtood like a rock in the midſt of a roaring ſea. They fell around. He ſtrode in blood. Dark Slimora echoed wide. The ſons of Ullin came. The battle ſpread over Lego. The chief of Erin overcame. He returned over the field with his fame. But pale he returned! The joy of his face was dark. He rolled his eyes in ſilence. The ſword hung, unſheathed, in his hand. His ſpear bent at every ſtep!

"Carril," ſaid the chief in ſecret, "the ſtrength of Cuthullin fails. My days are with the years that are paſt. No morning of mine ſhall ariſe. They ſhall ſeek me at Temora, but I ſhall not be found. Cormac will weep in his hall, and ſay, "Where is Erin's chief?" But my name is renowned! my fame in the ſong of bards. The youth will ſay in ſecret, O let me die as Cuthullin died! Renown clothed him like a robe. The light of his fame is great. Draw the arrow from my ſide. Lay Cuthullin beneath that oak. Place the ſhield of Caithbat near, that they may behold me amidſt the arms of my fathers!"

"And is the ſon of Semo fallen?" ſaid Carril with a ſigh. "Mournful are Tura's

walls. Sorrow dwells at Dunscäi. Thy spouse is left alone in her youth. The son* of thy love is alone! He shall come to Bragéla, and ask her why she weeps? He shall lift his eyes to the wall, and see his father's sword. "Whose sword is that?" he will say. The soul of his mother is sad. Who is that, like the hart of the desert, in the murmur of his course? His eyes look wildly round in search of his friend. Connal, son of Colgar, where hast thou been, when the mighty fell? Did the seas of Cogorma roll around thee? Was the wind of the south in thy sails? The mighty have fallen in battle, and thou wast not there. Let none tell it in Selma, nor in Morven's woody land. Fingal will be sad, and the sons of the desert mourn!"

By the dark rolling waves of Lego they raised the hero's tomb. Luäth †, at a distance, lies. The song of bards rose over the dead.

"Blest ‡ be thy soul, son of Semo! Thou

* Conloch, who was afterwards very famous for his great exploits in Ireland. He was so remarkable for his dexterity in handling the javelin, that when a good marksman is described, it has passed into a proverb, in the north of Scotland, *He is unerring as the arm of Conloch.*

† It was of old, the custom to bury the favourite dog near the master. This was not peculiar to the ancient Scots, for we find it practised by many other nations in their ages of heroism. There is a stone shewn still at Dunscäi in the isle of Sky, to which Cuthullin commonly bound his dog Luath. The stone goes by his name to this day.

‡ This is the song of the bards over Cuthullin's tomb. Every stanza closes with some remarkable title of the hero, which was always the custom in funeral elegies.

wert

wert mighty in battle. Thy ſtrength was like the ſtrength of a ſtream! thy ſpeed like the eagle's wing. Thy path in battle was terrible: the ſteps of death were behind thy ſword. Bleſt be thy ſoul, ſon of Semo, car-borne chief of Dunſcäi! Thou haſt not fallen by the ſword of the mighty, neither was thy blood on the ſpear of the brave. The arrow came, like the ſting of death in a blaſt: nor did the feeble hand, which drew the bow, perceive it. Peace to thy ſoul, in thy cave, chief of the iſle of miſt!"

"The mighty are diſperſed at Temora: there is none in Cormac's hall. The king mourns in his youth. He does not behold thy return. The ſound of thy ſhield is ceaſed: his foes are gathering round. Soft be thy reſt in thy cave, chief of Erin's wars! Bragéla will not hope for thy return, or ſee thy ſails in ocean's foam. Her ſteps are not on the ſhore: nor her ear open to the voice of thy rowers. She ſits in the hall of ſhells. She ſees the arms of him that is no more. Thine eyes are full of tears, daughter of car-borne Sorglan! Bleſt be thy ſoul in death, O chief of ſhady Tura!"

THE

BATTLE of LORA:

A

P O E M.

ARGUMENT.

Fingal, on his return from Ireland, after he had expelled Swaran from that kingdom, made a feaſt to all his heroes; he forgot to invite Ma-ronnan and Aldo, two chiefs, who had not been along with him in his expedition. They reſented his neglect; and went over to Erragon king of Sora, a country of Scandinavia, the declared enemy of Fingal. The valour of Aldo ſoon gained him a great reputation in Sora: and Lorma the beautiful wife of Erragon fell in love with him. He found means to eſcape with her and come to Fingal, who reſided then in Selma on the weſtern coaſt. Erragon invaded Scotland, and was ſlain in battle by Gaul the ſon of Morni, after he had rejected terms of peace offered him by Fingal. In this war Aldo fell, in a ſingle combat, by the hands of his rival Erragon, and the unfortunate Lorma afterwards died of grief.

THE

BATTLE of LORA:

A

POEM.

SON of the diſtant land, who dwelleſt in the ſecret cell! do I hear the ſound of thy grove? or is it thy voice of ſongs? The torrent was loud in my ear; but I heard a tuneful voice. Doſt thou praiſe the chiefs of thy land: or the ſpirits* of the wind? But, lonely dweller of rocks! look thou on that heathy plain. Thou ſeeſt green tombs, with their rank, whiſtling graſs: with their ſtones of moſſy heads. Thou ſeeſt them, ſon of the rock, but Oſſian's eyes have failed.

A mountain-ſtream comes roaring down, and ſends its waters round a green hill. Four moſſy ſtones, in the midſt of withered graſs, rear their heads on the top. Two trees, which the ſtorms have bent, ſpread their whiſtling branches around. This is thy dwelling, Erragon†; this thy narrow houſe: the ſound

* Alluding to the religious hymns of the Culdees.

† Erragon, or Ferg thonn, ſignifies *the rage of the waves*; probably a poetical name given him by Oſſian himſelf; for he goes by the name of Annir in tradition.

of thy ſhells have been long forgot in Sora. Thy ſhield is become dark in thy hall. Erragon, king of ſhips! chief of diſtant Sora! how haſt thou fallen on our mountains? How is the mighty low? Son of the ſecret cell! doſt thou delight in ſongs? Hear the battle of Lora. The ſound of its ſteel is long ſince paſt. So thunder on the darkened hill roars and is no more. The ſun returns with his ſilent beams. The glittering rocks, and green heads of the mountains ſmile.

The bay of Cona received our ſhips * from Erin's rolling waves. Our white ſheets hung looſe to the maſts. The boiſterous winds roared behind the groves of Morven. The horn of the king is ſounded; the deer ſtart from their rocks. Our arrows flew in the woods. The feaſt of the hill is ſpread. Our joy was great on our rocks, for the fall of the terrible Swaran. Two heroes were forgot at our feaſt. The rage of their boſoms burned. They rolled their red eyes in ſecret. The ſigh burſts from their breaſts. They were ſeen to talk together, and to throw their ſpears on earth. They were two dark clouds in the midſt of our joy; like pillars of miſt on the ſettled ſea. They glitter to the ſun, but the mariners fear a ſtorm.

" Raiſe my white ſails," ſaid Ma-ronnan, " raiſe them to the winds of the weſt. Let us ruſh, O Aldo! through the foam of the

* This was at Fingal's return from his war againſt Swaran.

northern

northern wave. We are forgot at the feaſt: but our arms have been red in blood. Let us leave the hills of Fingal, and ſerve the king of Sora. His countenance is fierce. War darkens around his ſpear. Let us be renowned, O Aldo, in the battles of other lands!"

They took their ſwords, their ſhields of thongs. They ruſhed to Lumar's reſounding bay. They came to Sora's haughty king, the chief of bounding ſteeds. Erragon had returned from the chaſe. His ſpear was red in blood. He bent his dark face to the ground; and whiſtled as he went. He took the ſtrangers to his feaſts: they fought and conquered in his wars.

Aldo returned with his fame towards Sora's lofty walls. From her tower looked the ſpouſe of Erragon, the humid, rolling eyes of Lorma. Her yellow hair flies on the wind of ocean. Her white breaſt heaves, like ſnow on heath; when the gentle winds ariſe, and ſlowly move it in the light. She ſaw young Aldo, like the beam of Sora's ſetting ſun. Her ſoft heart ſighed. Tears filled her eyes. Her white arm ſupported her head. Three days ſhe ſat within the hall, and covered her grief with joy. On the fourth ſhe fled with the hero, along the troubled ſea. They came to Cona's moſſy towers, to Fingal king of ſpears.

"Aldo of the heart of pride!" ſaid Fingal riſing in wrath: "ſhall I defend thee from the

the rage of Sora's injured king? who will now receive my people into their halls? Who will give the feaſt of ſtrangers, ſince Aldo, of the little ſoul, has diſhonoured my name in Sora? Go to thy hills, thou feeble hand! Go: hide thee in thy caves. Mournful is the battle we muſt fight, with Sora's gloomy king. Spirit of the noble Trenmor! When will Fingal ceaſe to fight? I was born in the midſt of battles *, and my ſteps muſt move in blood to the tomb. But my hand did not injure the weak, my ſteel did not touch the feeble in arms. I behold thy tempeſts, O Morven! which will overturn my halls! when my children are dead in battle, and none remains to dwell in Selma. Then will the feeble come, but they will not know my tomb. My renown is only in ſong. My deeds ſhall be as a dream to future times!"

His people gathered around Erragon, as the ſtorms round the ghoſts of night; when he calls them from the top of Morven, and prepares to pour them on the land of the ſtranger. He came to the ſhore of Cona. He ſent his bard to the king; to demand the combat of thouſands; or the land of many hills! Fingal ſat in his hall with the friends of

* Comhal the father of Fingal was ſlain in battle, againſt the tribe of Morni, the very day that Fingal was born; ſo that he may, with propriety, be ſaid to have been *born in the midſt of battles.*

his

his youth around him. The young heroes were at the chase, far-distant in the desert. The grey-haired chiefs talked of other times; of the actions of their youth; when the aged Nartmor* came, the chief of streamy Lora.

"This is no time," said Nartmor, "to hear the songs of other years: Erragon frowns on the coast, and lifts ten thousand swords. Gloomy is the king among his chiefs! he is like the darkened moon amidst the meteors of night; when they sail along her skirts, and give the light that has failed o'er her orb." "Come," said Fingal, "from thy hall, come, daughter of my love: come from thy hall, Bosmina †, maid of streamy Morven! Nartmor, take the steeds of the strangers. Attend the daughter of Fingal! Let her bid the king of Sora to our feast, to Selma's shaded wall. Offer him, O Bosmina! the peace of heroes, and the wealth of generous Aldo. Our youths are far distant. Age is on our trembling hands!"

She came to the host of Erragon, like a beam of light to a cloud. In her right hand was seen a sparkling shell. In her left an arrow of gold. The first, the joyful mark of peace! The latter, the sign of war. Erragon brightened in her presence as a rock, before the sudden beams of the sun; when they

* Neart-mor, *great strength.* Lora, *noisy.*

† Bos-mhina, *soft and tender hand.* She was the youngest of Fingal's children.

issue

issue from a broken cloud, divided by the roaring wind!

"Son of the distant Sora," began the mildly blushing maid, "come to the feast of Morven's king, to Selma's shaded walls. Take the peace of heroes, O warrior! Let the dark sword rest by thy side. Chusest thou the wealth of kings? Then hear the words of generous Aldo. He gives to Erragon an hundred steeds, the children of the rein: an hundred maids from distant lands; an hundred hawks with fluttering wing, that fly across the sky. An hundred * girdles shall also be thine, to bind high-bosomed maids. The friends of the births of heroes. The cure of the sons of toil. Ten shells studded with gems shall shine in Sora's towers: the bright water trembles on their stars, and seems to be sparkling wine. They gladdened once the kings of the world †, in the midst of their echoing halls. These, O hero! shall be thine; or thy white-bosomed spouse. Lorma shall roll her bright eyes in thy halls; though Fingal loves the generous Aldo: Fingal, who never injured an hero, though his arm is strong!"

* Sanctified girdles, till very lately, were kept in many families in the north of Scotland; they were bound about women in labour, and were supposed to alleviate their pains, and to accelerate the birth. They were impressed with several mystical figures, and the ceremony of binding them about the woman's waist, was accompanied with words and gestures which showed the custom to have come originally from the Druids.

† The Roman emperors.

"Soft

"Soft voice of Cona!" replied the king, "tell him, he ſpreads his feaſt in vain. Let Fingal pour his ſpoils around me. Let him bend beneath my power. Let him give me the ſwords of his fathers: the ſhields of other times: that my children may behold them in my halls, and ſay, "Theſe are the arms of Fingal." "Never ſhall they behold them in thy halls!" ſaid the riſing pride of the maid. "They are in the hands of heroes, who never yielded in war. King of echoing Sora! the ſtorm is gathering on our hills. Doſt thou not foreſee the fall of thy people, ſon of the diſtant land?"

She came to Selma's ſilent halls. The king beheld her down-caſt eyes. He roſe from his place, in his ſtrength. He ſhook his aged locks. He took the ſounding mail of Trenmor. The dark-brown ſhield of his fathers. Darkneſs filled Selma's hall, when he ſtretched his hand to his ſpear: the ghoſts of thouſands were near, and foreſaw the death of the people. Terrible joy roſe in the face of the aged heroes. They ruſhed to meet the foe. Their thoughts are on the deeds of other years: and on the fame that riſes from death!

Now at Trathal's ancient tomb the dogs of the chaſe appeared. Fingal knew that his young heroes followed. He ſtopped in the midſt of his courſe. Oſcar appeared the firſt; then Morni's ſon, and Némi's race. Fercuth*

* Fear-cuth, the ſame with Fergus, *the man of the word*, or a commander of an army.

ſhewed his gloomy form. Dermid ſpread his dark hair on wind. Oſſian came the laſt. I hummed the ſong of other times. My ſpear ſupported my ſteps over the little ſtreams. My thoughts were of mighty men. Fingal ſtruck his boſſy ſhield; and gave the diſmal ſign of war. A thouſand ſwords at once unſheathed, gleam on the waving heath. Three grey-haired ſons of ſong raiſe the tuneful mournful voice. Deep and dark with ſounding ſteps, we ruſh, a gloomy ridge, along: like the ſhower of a ſtorm, when it pours on a narrow vale.

The king of Morven ſat on his hill. The ſun-beam of battle flew on the wind. The friends of his youth are near, with all their waving locks of age. Joy roſe in the hero's eyes when he beheld his ſons in war: when he ſaw us amidſt the lightning of ſwords, mindful of the deeds of our fathers. Erragon came on, in his ſtrength, like the roar of a winter ſtream. The battle falls around his ſteps: death dimly ſtalks along by his ſide!

"Who comes," ſaid Fingal, "like the bounding roe! like the hart of echoing Cona? His ſhield glitters on his ſide. The clang of his armour is mournful. He meets with Erragon in the ſtrife! Behold the battle of the chiefs! It is like the contending of ghoſts in a gloomy ſtorm. But falleſt thou, ſon of the hill, and is thy white boſom ſtained with blood? Weep, unhappy Lorma, Aldo is no more!" The king took the ſpear of his ſtrength.

ſtrength. He was ſad for the fall of Aldo. He bent his deathful eyes on the foe: but Gaul met the king of Sora. Who can relate the fight of the chiefs? The mighty ſtranger fell!

"Sons of Cona!" Fingal cried aloud, "ſtop the hand of death. Mighty was he that is low. Much is he mourned in Sora! The ſtranger will come towards his hall, and wonder why it is ſo ſilent. The king is fallen, O ſtranger. The joy of his houſe is ceaſed. Liſten to the ſound of his woods. Perhaps his ghoſt is murmuring there! But he is far diſtant, on Morven, beneath the ſword of a foreign foe." Such were the words of Fingal, when the bard raiſed the ſong of peace. We ſtopped our uplifted ſwords. We ſpared the feeble foe. We laid Erragon in a tomb. I raiſed the voice of grief. The clouds of night came rolling down. The ghoſt of Erragon appeared to ſome. His face was cloudy and dark; an half-formed ſigh is in his breaſt. "Bleſt be thy ſoul, O king of Sora! thine arm was terrible in war!"

Lorma ſat in Aldo's hall. She ſat at the light of a flaming oak. The night came down, but he did not return. The ſoul of Lorma is ſad! "What detains thee, hunter of Cona? Thou didſt promiſe to return. Has the deer been diſtant far? Do the dark winds ſigh, round thee, on the heath? I am in the land of ſtrangers, who is my friend, but Aldo? Come from thy ſounding hills, O my beſt beloved!"

Her eyes are turned toward the gate. She listens to the rustling blast. She thinks it is Aldo's tread. Joy rises in her face! But sorrow returns again, like a thin cloud on the moon. "Wilt thou not return, my love? Let me behold the face of the hill. The moon is in the east. Calm and bright is the breast of the lake! When shall I behold his dogs, returning from the chase? When shall I hear his voice, loud and distant on the wind? Come from thy sounding hills, hunter of woody Cona!" His thin ghost appeared, on a rock, like a watry beam of feeble light: when the moon rushes sudden from between two clouds, and the midnight shower is on the field! She followed the empty form over the heath. She knew that her hero fell. I heard her approaching cries on the wind, like the mournful voice of the breeze, when it sighs on the grass of the cave!

She came. She found her hero! Her voice was heard no more. Silent she rolled her eyes. She was pale and wildly sad! Few were her days on Cona. She sunk into the tomb. Fingal commanded his bards; they sung over the death of Lorma. The daughters of Morven mourned her, for one day in the year, when the dark winds of autumn returned!

Son of the distant land*! Thou dwellest in the field of fame! O let thy song arise, at

* The poet addresses himself to the Culdee.

times,

times, in praiſe of thoſe who fell. Let their thin ghoſts rejoice around thee; and the ſoul of Lorma come on a feeble beam*: when thou lieſt down to reſt, and the moon looks into thy cave. Then ſhalt thou ſee her lovely; but the tear is ſtill on her cheek!

* Be thou on a moon-beam, O Morna, near the window of my reſt; when my thoughts are of peace; and the din of arms is paſt. FINGAL, B. I.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.